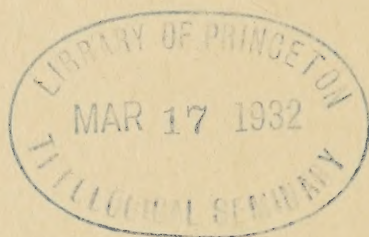


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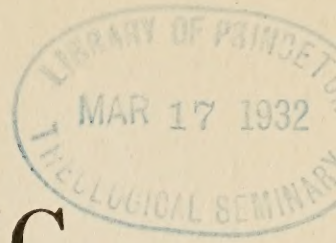
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IRVING SQUIRE—KIRTLAND A. WILSON

WITH A FOREWORD BY
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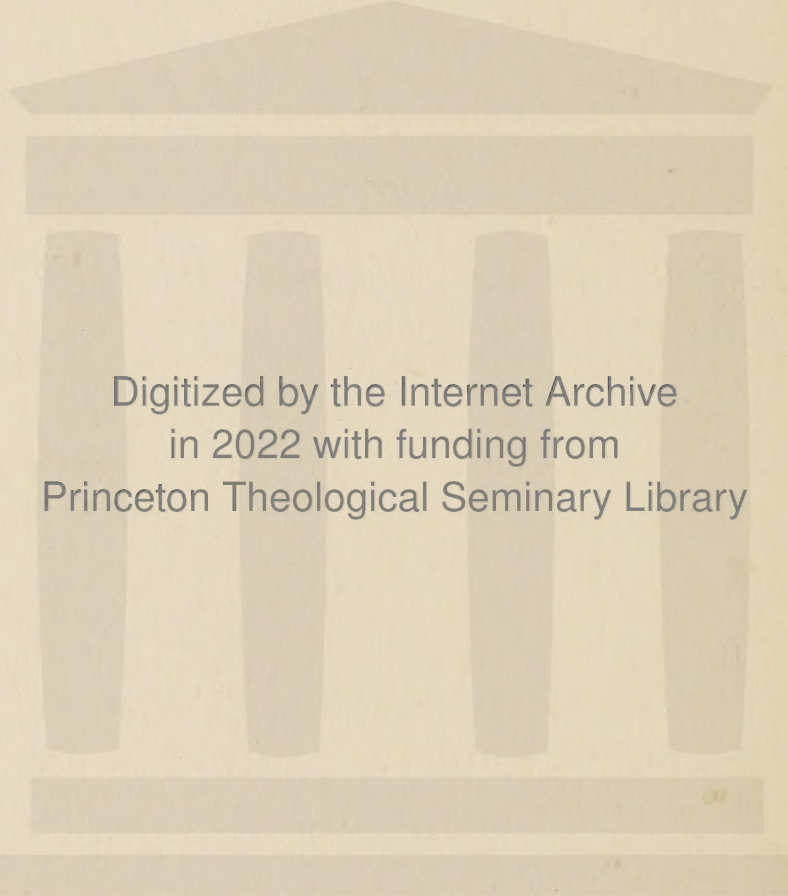


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*“Fortune sells many things to the hasty
which she gives to the slow.”*

—FRANCIS BACON.



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AUTHORS' NOTE

THE writing of even a small volume brings a sense of anxiety lest acknowledgment be not made in all cases where it is due.

The intention has been to give full credit in the text whenever using material from sources other than our own.

Of great inspiration and practical help have been those to whom we have been free to turn with foreknowledge that we would receive sympathetic and suggestive criticism. We wish to make public expression of our indebtedness to:

James Wright Brown, Publisher of *Editor and Publisher*; Howard B. Grose, D. D., Editor of *Missions*; Roy V. Wright, Managing Editor of *Railway Age*; William J. Newlin, Professor of Philosophy and Mathematics and Secretary of the Faculty, Amherst College; Harrison S. Elliott, Assistant Professor of Religious Education, Union Theological Seminary; C. G. Bittner, of the Bureau of Information, The International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations; Miss Mollie Sullivan, Publicity Director of The National Board of The Young Women's Christian Associations.

FOREWORD

WITHIN the covers of this little book will be found a calm, earnest and purposeful discussion of the nature and application of fundamental principles which should control the informative efforts of public welfare organizations.

To be quite frank, it is the only exposition of those vital, controlling principles that I have ever read with which I find myself in hearty sympathy and accord, as measuring up somewhat to ideals of Christian character and conduct which I firmly believe should characterize the intercourse of any great public welfare enterprise with the press and the public, its adherents and supporters—ideals equally applicable to any legitimate financial or commercial undertaking.

The authors do well to stress spiritual values. That, in the last analysis, is the real point of contact with the public—a point of contact ever fresh, enlisting at once every editor's interest and generally his cooperation.

Painstakingly and intelligently, the authors

FOREWORD

have developed a technique which they place at the disposal of leaders and workers in all branches of activity and service, together with a wealth of material gathered through serious research and many years of personal experience in weighing and appraising news values.

The book is, in short, a scientific treatise by master craftsmen on the subject of helpful constructive publicity.

JAMES WRIGHT BROWN.

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I.

INFORMATION SERVICE AND ITS BASIC PROBLEM

EVERY welfare worker is concerned in one way or another in informing the public of the purpose and service of his organization. He is not the exception if he has but a slight conception of principles and methods basic to information service. The lives of welfare workers, like those in other lines of activity, are crowded ones. In addition to routine responsibilities they face almost daily new problems which test their ingenuity and patience. Few, therefore, give special study to information service, though many cannot help feeling a deep interest in it, a relationship to it, and a responsibility for it, which they try with varying degrees of success to meet.

Many difficulties, whether of abstract or concrete kind, in the informative efforts of welfare organizations and workers may be cleared away, or at least reduced, by an inquiry into the

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fundamental aspects of information—its meaning and nature, its principles and purposes, and the general methods which these indicate in the processes of collecting and using information.

Numerous discussions with individuals and groups, as well as the personal practical experience and observation of the authors, have prompted the present writing. It is based on certain tested principles of information service. As these become clear and convincing to the reader, through the appeal of facts and reasoning, it will be possible to go on to their application to certain problems common to all welfare undertakings.

Consideration will be limited to basic principles and their general application. Experience has proved that they permit of wide application and that they are therefore worthy of careful study. It is for the reader to carry through the application to his own particular interests. The hope here is to establish an accord with him upon those fundamentals which, characteristic of the informative problems of welfare work in general, are also at the heart of the specific problem and undertaking with which he is concerned.

INFORMATION SERVICE

What is information service? Agreement upon a definition is important. The title of this book, and the avoidance thus far of the word "publicity," may have inspired a question from the reader. The reasons for this terminology will become increasingly apparent. It is evident that the term "information service" denotes a distinction from the common publicity undertaking. The distinction will be frequently illustrated and emphasized in these pages.

To inform is to communicate knowledge; and knowledge is perception of truth. In his essay on Truth, Francis Bacon recalls the cynical attitude of Pilate who, although asking "What is Truth?" would not stay for an answer. Because we are human, our personal pictures of what we have seen, and our personal responses to facts, to truth, often lead us to disagree with others as to what is a faithful portrayal of a given happening or condition. But the important thing is the abiding principle that, as an ancient prophet put it—

"Above all things truth beareth away
the victory"

—words which stand carved in stone beside the entrance of the Central Building of the New York Public Library.

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The affirmative aspect of truth, its constructive power and vitality make practical the words of Dr. Lyman Abbott, who said: "I have faith in truth and faith in my fellow-men, and a lifelong faith that the best way to conduct men to the truth is to let them know all that can be said against it."

It is not only from leaders of philosophic thought that there comes a conception of information which recognizes it to be essentially and of necessity synonymous with truth, for any worth-while appeal to intelligence must be constructive in character and purpose. Sir Charles Higham of England, who came to the United States in 1922 to attend the convention of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World, wrote a book as a result of his experience in directing the war-time publicity of the British Empire. In it he presents his conception of publicity as "the partisan of truth." "True publicity," he says, "sets principles in their right position." "Publicity in the long run becomes a moral force." "The right kind of publicity breaks up crusted prejudices, and sows the seeds of truth."

INFORMATION SERVICE

Information service, then, is not merely a means to attract attention.

The band plays in front of the circus tent to attract the public, and the ballyhoo man declaims and throws coins into the crowd, appealing to the sense of curiosity in all mankind and to the desire to get something for nothing. Under the spell of this excitement of our emotions and of mass psychology, we pay our money and follow the crowd into the "big top" or into the "side show," and the purpose of this kind of publicity has been achieved.

The press agent works his ingenuity to the utmost, seeking clever and adroit means of attracting attention and exciting interest, thus hoping to get his copy past the city editor.

A man who was registered at a New York hotel as T. R. Zan ordered immense quantities of raw beef sent to his room regularly for several days. If curiosity and suspicion on the part of the hotel management did not develop voluntarily they were at least aroused by suggestions inspired by a press agent. Had the hotel guest somehow smuggled a wild animal into his apartment? The newspapers seem to have learned of the probability as soon as

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the hotel manager, who investigated in the presence of reporters. The other occupant of the room was a lion. The guest and his beast were ejected. The news columns of the paper told the story of the lion that had occupied a room in a Broadway hotel, and of the remarkable individual who kept such an animal as a pet. Later the advertising columns announced that the animal in question would be displayed in the lobby of a theatre at a coming production of "Tarzan of the Apes."

In the theatrical profession and in some other undertakings, such "stunts" are called publicity. Sometimes the newspapers accept the publicity effort itself, because of its sheer novelty and audacity, as worthy of a story; but generally speaking they stand on guard against that form of free notoriety, seeking to bar it out as carefully as we lock our doors and windows against burglars. Both desire something to which they are not entitled.

A publicity man or a propagandist may, with a little ingenuity, stick to facts, but the truth is not in him if he fails to reveal the real purpose and performance of the undertaking which he represents.

INFORMATION SERVICE

Information service is not a direct appeal to emotion.

The Salvation Army's methods of attracting attention to its meetings are effective for those with whom it largely deals. The evidence is that these methods are entirely warranted by the need and the results.

This, however, is not essentially an informative process. It is largely an appeal to the emotions.

Information service is not merely a presentation of news.

The fact that a certain happening or condition has news interest and therefore is acceptable for news publication is not sufficient to accomplish the purpose which should be ultimately sought in an informative effort. It is essential that the news fact be related in the public mind to the ideal, purpose, and service of the organization.

Information service, not being merely any one of these things, must at times be able to do all that these methods are expected to do, and always should do something besides. What this

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is finds expression in a definition of information service:

Information service is a prompting to intelligence, idealism, and action—a prompting by the use of truth. It is such a presentation of truth as will bring about understanding, create good-will, and result in active and continuous cooperation.

Its intent is to make the spirit and work of the organization more articulate to the public and to the personnel of the organization itself; in other words to reveal and interpret purpose and service, and by so doing to gain interest and cooperation.

What, then, is the basic problem of information service?

Is it not so to present our facts to those to whom we wish to make our appeal that they will be interested in them, will recognize them as facts, be informed by them, and be so stimulated by them that they will respond to them?

It is essentially a basic problem because common to every informative effort, whether general or specific. It is basic, too, in the fact that

INFORMATION SERVICE

whatever the immediate object of any informative effort, its ultimate purpose should be identical with every informative effort of the organization. Hence it will be necessary to treat it from the basic standpoint and not to turn aside to details which will occur to the reader and which he will study for himself.

This problem is clearly an inclusive one. To deal with it at all adequately analysis must be made of the character of the facts which are to be made available, and consideration given to the whole process of their development and use, from the sources of their supply to the fields of their distribution.

It is essential to recognize in this connection that proper preparation for information service, whether for a special activity or for the work as a whole, includes study and assurance of the quality back of the information to be presented—in other words, the quality of our facts.

II.

THE QUALITY OF OUR FACTS

THE Associated Advertising Clubs of the World describe the responsibilities of an advertising agency as follows in a booklet distributed at the New York Advertising Exposition in November, 1923:

“It is the business of an advertising agency to study the product itself, to compare it with competitive products, to examine its utility, its service to mankind, to study the effectiveness of the way in which it is presented to the public in package and design, and, if possible, to increase the attractiveness of the product’s appeal to the public. It is the business of an advertising agency to study the market of the product by investigations among the merchants who sell it and among the men or women who will ultimately use it.”

The reputable advertising institution insists upon quality back of the facts which it is called

THE QUALITY OF OUR FACTS

upon to advertise. It seeks by careful investigation to determine whether the commodity or service which is to be advertised measures up to the excellence claimed for it. In addition, to prepare itself for the task delegated to it by its client, it surveys the methods of promotion and distribution, carefully analyzes possible markets, and considers the ability of the organization to handle increased business.

Look at some of the details of such an investigation and survey, keeping in mind the application of these details to our own problems.

I. Commodity or Service.

1. Need.
2. Quality.
3. Appearance.

II. Plant and Organization.

1. Personnel.
2. Ability to handle increased business.

III. Distribution.

1. Methods of promotion.
 - a. Personal solicitation.
 - (1) Direct appeal.
 - (2) Through jobbers.

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b. Mail order campaigns.

c. Advertising.

2. Transportation problems.

IV. Market (present and potential).

1. Who make up the market?

2. Where do they live?

3. Consumptive power.

4. Competition.

V. Financial problem.

1. Adequate capital.

2. Proper administration.

3. Sound credit.

If leaders in the advertising profession recognize that sound business practice calls for such standards and such analysis, how evident it is that the informative effort of a public or quasi-public organization calls for careful, painstaking, and frequent analysis, both by way of preparation and as a guide and stimulant to progress. This is true whether the effort is general or special, for in either case the interests of the organization as a whole are concerned.

Many so-called analyses are little or nothing else than lists of methods and avenues of pub-

THE QUALITY OF OUR FACTS

licity. They are frequently offered by publicity agents, both professional and amateur. As lists of what they are, they have their place as reminders of possibilities; but they are useless as indices of conditions and equally useless for bringing to the surface the precise nature of the problems and needs calling for experience, discretion, and vision in their treatment.

Nor should analysis be confused with program. The program is a further step. No intelligent program, no sound, guiding policy, can be formulated without previous exhaustive investigation and frank facing of actual conditions and problems.

It is a significant fact that large advertising institutions occasionally finance the advertising campaigns of clients when they have satisfied themselves as to the quality of the commodity or service concerned, the need for it, methods of distribution, accessibility of markets, and capacity of the plant to handle increased business.

The experienced salesman knows how closely physical appearance is associated with quality.

Two well-known brands of shaving soap were so similar in quality that the marketing appeal

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for a time was largely based on rival claims for the containers in which they were sold. The sale of ordinary soda crackers and other products of similar character was heavily increased when they were packed in attractive, dust-proof boxes. "We couldn't improve the powder so we improved the box" was a familiar line for a long time to readers of advertisements.

Unworthy welfare undertakings condemn themselves, and may be ignored here. We are all convinced of the idealism and value of purpose of the particular welfare undertaking in which we are personally interested. It is inconceivable that anyone can work happily or successfully for a welfare organization if he lacks sympathy with its objects and faith in its methods. He will wish frequently to satisfy himself of the quality of the commodity of his organization, namely, service.

Manifestly, the quality of the facts passing into the hands of the information bureau depends upon the measure of accomplishment in the particular undertaking; hence the power of service of a bureau of information depends upon how nearly the workers approach to the

THE QUALITY OF OUR FACTS

accomplishment of the ideals of the organization through the use of proper methods. That power depends also upon capacity to serve on a larger scale. Shall we not assert, then, as another principle and rule in information service, that—

Quality of performance equaling quality of ideal must be back of the facts presented as information.

The service of an organization should not only endure but grow under such radium-like treatment.

III.

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

BRIEF reference has been made to that very human institution, the press agent, and an illustration was given typifying the ingenuity and audacity he often brings into play in order to overcome the increasing obstacles upon his path into the public prints.

The term "press agent" has come to stand for one conception and method of publicity. The term is not necessarily an indictment. But the methods to which many of his kind have frequently resorted—a preying upon the public press rather than adherence to journalistic ethics—have made editors and the public wary and suspicious even of publicity undertakings which are legitimate in purpose and ethically conducted. This and other conditions, which will be indicated later, explain the present-day popular interpretation of the word "publicity." It has come to signify something apart from its true meaning.

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

The man in the street does not think of “publicity” as having a real relationship to education, to a constructive presentation and interpretation of facts. He thinks of it mainly, and with ample reason, as virtually synonymous with pure promotion and propaganda.

A requisite of preparation for sound information service, therefore, is to study carefully the distinction between information service and promotion. The difference is not only to be drawn in actual practice but, at bottom, is to be found in an attitude of mind. Unless the worker concerned with informative undertakings is clear in his mind that there is a profound distinction between the two, and believes implicitly that one conception is to be infinitely preferred above the other, he will not deal with the problems in this field in a way to effect lasting results. Propaganda has only passing vitality. True publicity builds for permanency.

Anyone attempting to organize and conduct a proper informative undertaking must use methods even above those of the high grade publicity man. If it is catchy stories, incidents

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which may entertain but have no real significance or value, articles of self-glorification, that the welfare organization feels that it really needs for furthering its work, then by all means let it call in an experienced press agent and tell him to get busy.

The origin of the publicity man might be made the subject of interesting speculation. The search might take us back to Homer who, singing the heroes of the siege of Troy, was the earliest and greatest classical example. Then there were the town-criers and those romantic figures, the troubadours, who were in the retinues of their over-lords and entertained them and their followers with songs which were little else than rhymed accounts of the achievements of these nobles and their ancestors. History is indebted to them.

And now, today, the troubadours are legion, using not song or rhyme but searching out every means of attracting attention to the undertakings they represent and singing their praises. Mainly, of course, they seek to use the newspapers as their instruments.

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

A woman publicity agent, concerned with an important social welfare organization, gave an account at a recent National Conference on Social Work of her effort to determine just what competition she was facing in submitting material to the newspapers. She obtained an editor's permission to search through a mass of paper, both used and unused, passing through the hands of the city-desk and copy-reading staff in the course of a few days. When she had picked over every piece and classified all the material, she found that all but a small part of it was composed of the outgivings of publicity agents, most of whom exhibited a profound ignorance of proper content and form.

It has been stated by a New York editor that were the newspapers in some of our larger cities to publish all such material which comes to them they would have to increase the number of their pages from six to twelve times. Imagine a newspaper such as *The New York Times*, publishing rarely under thirty-two pages on week-days, issuing regularly a paper of several hundred pages!

Nearly every entertainment undertaking has its advance agent or publicity man. He is

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found also in the employ of politicians and political parties, demagogues, blue-sky ventures, foreign notables, industries, unions, churches, denominations, clubs, organizations of virtually every kind, both good and bad—those with a legitimate claim upon space and those which have not. Too often the publicity agent is employed by individuals and institutions that, while having information which should reach the public, do not know his experience and standards or understand that there are wrong ways and right ways of publicity effort.

There are individuals, companies, and organizations that, preferring not to be known as employing publicity agents, do so indirectly, hoping that the latter will develop stories so cleverly and with such adroit appeal that they will catch editors off their guard and the material be passed by them into the printed page.

Now and again this is “worked” successfully, but it is extremely rare nowadays for any form of camouflage to conceal from an editor the purpose of the effort. The big city dailies and the great press services and syndicates which gather and distribute material over wide territories are particularly adept in separating the

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

wheat from the chaff, and will discard masses of copy that may be legitimate and well-prepared rather than take a risk.

For the experienced and accomplished press agent and publicity man the newspapers have not, however, that feeling of weariness which they have for the tyro and for the individual who attempts that from which his ignorance should warn him. The experienced publicity man knows how to prepare and submit copy; indeed he is more likely than not to have gained his experience in newspaper work itself. And as for the out-and-out press agent, we find editors who feel that if such an one succeeds in creating an extraordinary situation his effort at least is worthy of a story—usually a facetious one, with which the press agent will be about as well satisfied as though the story as he conceived it or wrote it were published in good faith.

Consider the editor's task and responsibility. It is his duty to pass upon every "tip" and every piece of copy that is presented. He must be on the alert to recognize the news value that

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may lurk in a remote sentence of even a poorly written story. This may call for investigation, and for the preparation of a story on what is found. If the investigation shows the submitted report to be unreliable, the time of the newspaper office has been wasted and the original source of the "information" will have put himself in an unenviable category in that office.

The fact that editors are bound to inspect and pass upon all material should not only inspire sympathy, courtesy, and care on the part of the voluntary purveyor of information; it should be recognized and appreciated as truly encouraging to the individual and organization that has something worth while to submit. The editor is necessarily receptive of information. It is an absurd fiction that prejudice distorts his judgment of news values. We are speaking in general terms, as the exceptions to this rule are rare. Editors, of course, are not infallible; their work in the main is done hurriedly, and they labor under various limitations just as do workers in other vocations. The welfare worker disposed to see disinterest and hostility to his organization on the part of editors, and to criticize them on these

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

grounds, is not in an attitude of mind likely to help develop effective information service for his organization.

Newspapers have standards. Eighty-two per cent of the newspapers in all cities of this country with 100,000 or more population were represented at a convention of the American Society of Newspaper Editors at which the following ethical standards were adopted:

Responsibility. A journalist who uses his power for any selfish or unworthy purpose is faithless to a high trust.

Freedom of the press. It is the unquestioned right to discuss whatever is not explicitly forbidden by law, including the wisdom of any restrictive statute.

Independence. Partisanship or comment which knowingly departs from the truth does violence to the best spirit of American journalism.

Sincerity, truthfulness, accurateness. By every consideration of good faith a newspaper is constrained to be truthful. Headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the articles which they surmount.

Impartiality. Sound practice makes clear

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distinction between news reports and expressions of opinion. News reports should be free from opinion or bias of any kind.

Fair play. A newspaper should not publish unofficial charges affecting reputation or moral character. A newspaper should not invade private rights or feelings without sure warrant of public right as distinguished from public curiosity. It is the duty of a newspaper to make prompt and complete correction of its own serious mistakes of fact or opinion, whatever their origin.

Decency. A newspaper cannot escape conviction of insincerity if, while professing high moral purpose, it supplies incentives to base conduct such as are to be found in details of crime and vice, publication of which is not demonstrably for the general good.

The present-day newspaper, it is readily apparent, has come to depend in a measure upon the product of the publicity agent. Turning to almost any newspaper any day one finds in it publicity material, especially in theatrical news and notes, although no actress can secure space nowadays by so obvious a method as hav-

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

ing her jewels stolen or taking milk baths. Material coming from commercial and other institutions is often regarded as legitimate. But the very dependence of newspapers to some extent on publicity material is regarded by an increasing number of them as destructive both of their intended functions as searchers for news and of originality in the development of news facts. To preserve originality of presentation many papers rewrite practically all such publicity material as they accept.

No business is more productive of publicity copy than the automobile industry. At least one great American newspaper has absolutely barred every line of such copy from its columns.

The newspaper looks upon paid advertising, of course, as the highest form of publicity. The statement that a paper will naturally incline towards giving news space to the undertakings of advertisers is somewhat resented by publishers and editors; but it is reasonable to assume that, if two pieces of material are submitted to the editor, both of equal news value, one from an advertiser and one from a non-

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advertiser, the former will get the space if any space is open. Newspapers live on their advertising revenues, and can scarcely help being influenced in some measure by that fact, though we would be inaccurate and unjust to magnify the extent of that influence.

Increasing recognition of the value of publicity, rightly conceived and conducted, has greatly multiplied the number of publicity agents. The consequent competition in ideas and for space is improving the standard of publicity work. The law of the survival of the fittest is asserting itself. The revulsion of press and public against selfish or biased publicity effort is a healthy sign. Leaders of thought in active fields of human affairs, and organizations directly or indirectly related to the mediums of publicity, are voicing principles and explaining distinctions which are being more and more accepted and practiced.

It is significant that theatrical press agents have formed an organization whose purpose they declared to be to purify their particular business; that is, to refuse to recognize as of their profession those whose methods cast dis-

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

credit upon the efforts of the more ethical and experienced.

President Harding, himself long a newspaper editor and publisher, sent a letter to be read at the Press Congress of the World in the fall of 1922, in which he pointed out the place of the newspaper as an educational factor and the unmoral character of propaganda.

“Propaganda,” he said, “aims primarily at shutting up the mind against other conclusions than those which the propagandists design to implant. Education, on the contrary, aims to open the mind, to prepare it, to make it receptive, and to urge it to formulate its own conclusions.

“Propaganda would at last mean intellectual paralysis; education is, when properly employed, intellectual stimulus. It is better that men should think than that they should accept conclusions formulated by other men for them. We have need in these times that men should think deeply, that they should realize the necessity of settling their own problems.”

The purpose and method of the ordinary publicity undertaking are, it is evident, not es-

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entially constructive. But a welfare organization could with propriety approach a publicity agency of high standing, make a contract with it for promotion, and then leave the details of the enterprise to the agency with much assurance that the results obtained would be in a measure efficacious.

One might argue for such a plan on the basis that various commercial enterprises use this method with success; also on the basis that a fairly fine analogy can be drawn between certain aspects of welfare organizations and commercial institutions, as we have already done. Logic teaches us, however, that nothing is more dangerous to correct reasoning than analogy; and while there are many points which admit of comparison and are productive of suggestion, the fact remains that welfare organizations are not commercial institutions.

A bureau of information should have a finer aim and a more specific target.

When Frederick L. Allen, secretary of the Corporation of Harvard University, asserted that "it is the plain duty of our educational institutions to let the public know what they

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

are about," and then added even more emphatically that the publicity efforts of these institutions must be of a different type from business publicity, he was thinking along the same line as we are at this moment. His opinions were so favorably regarded that the Committee on Policy in Publicity connected with the Associated Harvard Clubs—including in its membership an officer of the Associated Press—recommended that the position of publicity officer of Harvard be made a permanent one and elevated to an equality with a full professorship in the institution.

"The university," said the Committee, "does not want a mere press agent without any academic standing. It wants a man of faculty rank, whose title expresses a relationship of confidence and authority."

Mr. Allen holds that it is in the intellectual life of the educational institution, rather than, for example, in college athletics, that the greatest opportunities for college publicity are to be found. He sees therein, it is evident, an opportunity and a responsibility which cannot be met with satisfaction by ordinary meth-

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ods of publicity or by outside publicity agencies, no matter how experienced and reputable.

At the 1922 convention of the Associated Advertising Clubs it was asserted that—

“Advertising as a means of reaching large bodies of people cannot be used advantageously in promoting community movements and the institutional life of society as it is now used by business.”

Mr. Allen would emphasize educational values for the purposes of publicity. Welfare organizations would emphasize other values of human importance, which not only include educational values but transcend them.

Keeping in mind as a goal the highest characteristic or quality of the organization concerned, it is logical to assert that—

Information service falls to the level of ordinary publicity, legitimate though that publicity may be, if it fails to reveal clearly and emphasize continually the finest quality or highest service of the undertaking concerned. If it does not do these things, is it not only inadequate but misleading?

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

Dr. John R. Mott surely and comprehensively sums up a purpose and policy which may be regarded as ideal for informative undertakings when he states that the commission and service of the Bureau of Information of the International Committee of the Y. M. C. A. is "to interpret the past, help form the present, and prophesy the future."

Keep these words in mind, as coming from a great religious leader, and couple them as a profound philosophic and idealistic statement with the words of a leader in the newspaper profession, James Wright Brown:

"Organize—here and now, if you please—a fact-cult, to which teachers and preachers and writers and all those who love truth may pledge their allegiance, and then make a drive for basic facts. . . . There are literally hundreds of questions crying to heaven for solution, questions that must be solved righteously. But the great mass of the people are inane and inert, absolutely unable to exercise their influence because the wells of public opinion have been poisoned by propagandists and the people are not getting the raw material of public opinion

INFORMING YOUR PUBLIC

—which is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

“My conviction is that the people want the facts blood raw, but are not getting them because the sources of original fact have been cut off from them by the hired propagandists—the special pleader who hands out half-truths and sugar-coated lies under the guise of authentic information—and the result is a disorganized society and a distrustful and chaotic world.

“The purpose of an information bureau that is to be of service to mankind—and that is the mask under which most propagandists travel—is not to give out the things the selfish men who pay for them want given out and to hide the things they want hidden, but instead to show the way to basic fact—whether these facts are favorable or unfavorable to the cause represented.”

These conceptions of information service mean nothing if they do not signify that there is a negative and useless kind of publicity—perilous and destructive indeed—on the one hand, and on the other an affirmative, constructive, ideal-

INFORMATION VERSUS PROMOTION

istic kind which embraces all human welfare in its conception and practice.

The words quoted above are comprehensive as a statement of purpose and responsibility. The more they are studied the more do they become significant and inspiring.

The purpose, service, and scope of a welfare undertaking, the nature of its mission to mankind, call for a conception and performance of information service which shall conform to all that is best in that movement; call for these things, we say, for we recognize them as an idealistic goal—a goal to strive for even though it may not be fully reached.

“Ideals,” said Lamartine, “are truth at a distance.”

An idealistic conception in information service is based on faith in the affirmative results of truth and in the idealism of men. That is the firmest ground on which to work and build.

A real leader in information service will recognize that the personnel, both employed and voluntary, and members too, should knit themselves together in a continuous, growing, enlightened effort to keep before their organiza-

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tion, and the public, information concerning the organization's service and ideals. The greater the organization the greater demand upon the information service for leadership.

To achieve true leadership in this field is a large order, but a consistent and worth-while one. It calls for patience and faith, painstaking effort and vigilance, wisdom and farsightedness. The conception, the policy, the method, cannot obtain the common accord in a brief time.

IV.

FIELDS OF SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION

IT has been sought in the previous chapters to establish a general conception of information service: what it is and what it is not, its distinguishing qualities and problems as compared with promotion and ordinary publicity, emphasizing what it seeks to do. We have found that it is a prompting to intelligence, idealism, and action by the use of truth; and we have affirmed our faith in the constructive power of truth applied to the idealism of men.

The basic problem involved in information service was considered, and was determined as being to present facts so that they would interest those to whom we wish to make our appeal, and be recognized by them as facts. The result would then be that they would not only become informed but would be so stimulated by our presentation of the facts that they would respond to them and act upon them.

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The requisite of quality back of our facts was our next consideration, the principle being recognized that, in addition to the quality which we know exists in the purposes and ideals of any worthy organization, there must also be that quality which is established by the proper performance of its tasks, in whatever relation to society it may be. Having assured ourselves that the product of our organization was one to be commended, a usable product, satisfying and inspiring, emphasis was placed on the need of making sure that our past experience and plans for the future fit us to care properly for additional responsibilities.

The next step was an analysis of the differences between promotional efforts and ordinary publicity undertakings on the one hand and information service on the other; and it was noted that the idealistic purposes involved in welfare movements call for informative effort which shall reveal these purposes and contribute to their achievement.

The first step in successful performance is a proper analysis leading to a definition of the problem in hand. What has been attempted

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thus far is to inform ourselves or refresh our minds on the inclusive nature of the general problem of information service, and what we seek to do when we try to solve it. The next requirement is a study of the means at hand for the solution of the problem in any welfare organization.

Reference has been made to the method followed by advertising concerns of high standing in ascertaining the nature and value of the product or service which is to be advertised. Having determined these points their investigation would then proceed to a study of precise and detailed information concerning all phases of the product or service and of the character and extent of the existing and potential market.

This calls for a determination of the sources of supply for the facts which are to be used and the fields into which they should be distributed, as well as the proper methods of collection and distribution.

It is desirable in this connection to draft a chart for the specific undertaking in mind, developing it in much detail, even to including names of individuals and places. The accompanying chart facing page 38 is by way of

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suggestion, not with any idea that it is complete. A chart such as suggested, made after careful study of any organization, may include other divisions along the general lines indicated.

Reasons for recommending the chart are as follows:

1. It will refresh our minds as to the extent of our undertaking.
2. It will tend to keep before us some possibilities that we might otherwise overlook.
3. It will assist in determining both general and specific relationships.
4. It will indicate means of collecting, co-ordinating, and using facts.

A chart can be made of constant value not only for the members of the bureau of information itself but for examining committees and lay workers, and indeed for the entire membership of the organization.

The moment attempt is made to list either the various sources of supply of information or the fields of distribution, it will be found that a considerable number of those which would be placed under one classification should have place also in the other. In other words, there

GENERAL INFORMATION SERVICE

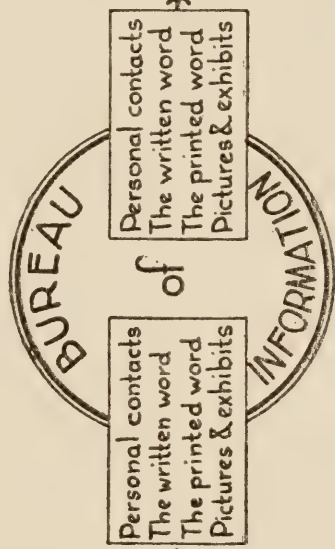
SOURCES of SUPPLY

I. WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION

- a. Membership
- b. Lay committees
- c. Departments and secretarial force
- d. General agencies and branch organizations
- e. Conferences and training schools
- f. Technical literature
 - 1. Books
 - 2. Magazines
 - 3. Pamphlets
 - 4. Reports

II. IN THE COMMUNITY

- a. Churches
- b. Schools
- c. Civic, commercial and fraternal organizations
- d. Newspapers
- e. Other organizations of similar nature
- f. Local Government
- g. Industries



FIELDS of DISTRIBUTION

I. WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION

- a. Membership
- b. Lay committees
- c. Constituency
- d. General agencies and branch organizations
- e. Conferences and training schools
- f. Books and publications

II. IN THE COMMUNITY

- a. Churches
- b. Schools
- c. Civic, commercial and fraternal organizations
- d. Publications
 - 1. News
 - 2. Trade
 - 3. Church
 - 4. Popular magazines
- e. Employers and employees

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are many elements in any organization and many relationships which constitute both a source of supply and a field of distribution.

Because of the dual relationship of many of these elements it is natural that the moment we begin to discuss any one of them we inevitably think of it not only as a part of one classification—say, of the sources of supply—but also as a part of the other classification.

We will take up the two classifications in their logical order, looking first at the sources of supply, and emphasizing that relationship.

In setting down a list of the various sources, we immediately note that they fall into two general groups. Whether the particular organization we represent occupies only an office or is in possession of a building and equipment, its relations, both actual and potential, extend into the community so that there are not only organization sources of information but community sources as well.

In listing the component parts of the first group—namely, those within the organization—we set down not only the names of the different departments of activity in our undertaking, but

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give first place to a more definite and inclusive element—the membership.

The membership composes the body of the organization. It is a cross-section of the life of the community—representative of the motley and myriad elements, activities, and problems of the community. The membership is interested in various departments of the work and reaches into numerous phases of the community life. We will agree that, both as sources of information and as mediums and fields of distribution, their possibilities for information service are not often fully sounded.

The board of directors or trustees and other committees should also have an important place in our list. If their possibilities for usefulness in information service have not been realized in any considerable measure, as we all probably feel likely, many reasonable explanations can no doubt be offered. We will agree as to their great possibilities, certainly, and that increased effort should be made to use them.

Under the next group—community sources—are to be listed churches, civic and commercial organizations, fraternal organizations, schools,

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and newspapers. Any active welfare worker who has developed relationships with one or more of these will testify to the value and usefulness of the information which comes out of these relationships.

As one studies the detail and scope of this list, he cannot help being impressed by the evidences of varied relationship to community, sectional, national and world-wide affairs which place any welfare organization, potentially at least, in a position of extraordinary importance and power as a fact-gathering organization.

This realization emphasizes a responsibility. America is an idealistic nation. Its idealism can only be defined and ultimately made real through the education of the people by the proper presentation to them of pertinent facts. We will be impressed with the fact that the potential position of the welfare organization as a distributor of information is as great as its fact-gathering resources. In other words, any welfare undertaking—because of its range of activities and the character of its organization and relationships—constitutes an agency for the gathering and dissemination of intelligence that is probably unsurpassed by any but

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the largest commercial organization in possibilities and opportunities. This, too, is an opportunity for, as is stated by Melville E. Stone, former head of the Associated Press, only five per cent of the world's population knows what our civilization is, or cares to preserve it.

Turning now to the fields of distribution, two general groups will be found to which information is to be disseminated, either specifically or generally. Bear in mind that in the present consideration these groups are thought of, not as mediums of conveying information, but rather as the targets towards which we are aiming. All groups, general or subsidiary, have also a relationship, more or less direct and important as the case may be, to the conveying of information. But for the present think of them chiefly as composing that truly powerful body to which we wish to present our facts so that they will recognize them as facts, be interested by them, be informed by them, and be so stimulated by them that they will act upon them.

In developing this list we will note what we believe to be an inescapable emphasis upon

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the place which the distribution of information within the organization holds in the whole matter of informative effort. This is extremely important. Any conception of a general information service which does not take into account the lay and employed personnel, members and constituency, as well as the general public, would be woefully inadequate, yet our experience is that organizations are prone to neglect or overlook those most closely related to them, on the assumption that their membership must of necessity or by some occult means be already informed of their undertaking.

What elements compose your audience in your local field?

The logical beginning for the list would be the members. The member is a walking advertisement; more than that, if properly educated and informed, he is giving publicity to an ideal by living it.

The committeemen are entitled to information, and have an important place in the list.

It is important to keep the constituency informed and stimulated.

Churches, civic and commercial organizations,

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fraternal organizations, schools, newspapers with their editors and proprietors, employers and employes who should know of the welfare activities in their communities—all these are surely among the groups to be informed.

The outside field to be reached with information is obviously identical with the outside sources of information. The interchange of material, of facts and related information, needs to be constant if the organization as a whole is to work with increasing accord, co-ordination, and enlightenment.

HAVING in fair detail before us the character and extent both of the sources of supply and the fields of distribution, what are the mediums and methods by which information is to pass from any one source or group of sources into a particular field or group of fields?

It is evident that the question of mediums and methods must be dealt with later. Briefly summarized, they are:

1. Personal contacts.
2. The written word.
3. The printed word.
4. Pictures, bulletin boards, and exhibits.

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The chart indicates that information from the various sources is coordinated and cleared through the bureau of information.

The next chapter will be devoted to an analysis of the classes of facts which form the material of information service, the material which is to be developed in the sources of supply and moved from those sources through the bureau of information into the fields of distribution. This consideration will naturally lead into a discussion of the nature of one of the most vital things in present-day American life—news and the newspaper.

V.

CLASSES OF FACTS

IN the course of the chapters thus far devoted to this study frequent use has been made of the word "facts." Use of the word in connection with information service implies recognition of the necessity of strict adherence to truth in informative efforts; but it should be borne in mind that there is a measureless volume and variety of facts more or less accessible for our development and use and that we should exercise discretion in their selection.

“ ‘The time has come,’ the Walrus said,
‘To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
Of cabbages—and kings.’ ”

It is evident that the Walrus thought himself ready to talk on any one of a considerable range of subjects without much consideration of their appropriateness, application, or appeal. An effective selection of facts for any particular purpose is the work of trained judgment. Help

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will be found in collecting as well as selecting facts, and in using them, if we inquire whether they have special characteristics which indicate their timeliness, usefulness, and relationships.

For such an inquiry use may be made of a news story published in *The New York Times* of June 14, 1922.

“Thirty gold coins belonging to the first series of gold coins ever minted have been unearthed by American archæologists who were working on the buried ruins of Sardis. They are of the coinage of Cræsus, the last King of Lydia.

“The coins were minted some time between 561 and 546 B.C. Some of the thirty ‘staters,’ as they are called, are as bright as new-minted pieces of United States gold money.

“Before this find, there were only five ‘staters’ known to be in existence. These are in the British Museum.

“News of this discovery was brought to the United States by Dr. T. Leslie Shear, an archæologist of Columbia University, one of the members of the expedition who were present at the discovery.”

What facts are presented in this news report? Without attempting to give them in extreme detail, they may be set down as follows:

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Thirty gold coins unearthed.

Coins belonging to first series ever minted.

Unearthed by American archæologists.

Archæologists working on buried ruins of Sardis.

Coins are of the coinage of Cræsus.

Cræsus was the last King of Lydia.

Coins minted between 561 and 546 B. C.

Coins called "staters."

Some of the coins as bright as new-minted pieces of
U. S. gold money.

Before this find, only five "staters" known to be in
existence.

These five are in British Museum.

News of discovery brought to U. S. by Dr. T. Leslie
Shear.

Dr. Shear is an archæologist of Columbia University.

Dr. Shear was one of the members of the expedition
present at the discovery.

These facts differ from one another, not merely in meaning but in certain characteristics mainly discernible in tense and in relationship. The difference is such that they may be readily divided into two general groups. Group I will be composed of facts which are new, Group II of facts which are more or less old and which furnish the setting without which the new facts would be unintelligible.

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GROUP I.

Thirty gold coins unearthed.

Unearthed by American archæologists.

Some of the coins as bright as new-minted pieces of U. S. gold money.

News of discovery brought to U. S. by Dr. T. Leslie Shear.

GROUP II.

Coins belonging to first series ever minted.

Archæologists working on buried ruins of Sardis.

Coins are of the coinage of Cræsus.

Cræsus was the last King of Lydia.

Coins minted between 561 and 546 B. C.

Coins called "staters."

Before this find, only five "staters" known to be in existence.

These five are in British Museum.

Dr. Shear is an archæologist of Columbia University.

Dr. Shear was one of the members of the expedition present at the discovery.

As another specimen for similar analysis let us take the introduction to *The Chicago Tribune's* dispatch from Coblenz, June 10, 1923, reporting the recall of the last American troops on the Rhine:

"A terse cable from Washington tumbled 1,200 of the snappiest, happiest soldiers along the Rhine off the top of the world this afternoon."

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“Major General Henry Allen and staff are staying up half the night, drawing up plans for a hasty departure, while the tail end of the army that busted the Hindenburg line is drinking down with their last sparkling Rhine wine the memories of four happy years in Coblenz.”

The facts in these sentences may be classified as follows:

GROUP I.

A terse cable tumbled soldiers off the top of the world this afternoon.

The cable was from Washington.

General Allen and staff are staying up half the night.

General Allen and staff are drawing up plans for hasty departure.

The tail end of the army is drinking down their last sparkling Rhine wine.

GROUP II.

Twelve hundred soldiers.

Snappiest, happiest soldiers.

Soldiers along the Rhine.

The army that busted the Hindenburg line.

Four happy years in Coblenz.

A study of these individual facts and groups would bring to light certain interesting relationships, but the analysis to the extent we have carried it is intended to emphasize the presence

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of two general classes of facts—a condition which will be found in every presentation of information except the barest announcement. For the purpose of our discussion we may describe these classifications as:

1. Current facts (or facts in motion).
2. Reservoir facts.

These two classes of facts will become readily distinguishable and definite in our minds if we make use of a simile. Down a mountainside flow several streams, having their sources in different fountainheads. In the valley below they flow into and form a large body of water, which they are constantly replenishing, freshening, and stirring.

One can dip into the mountainside currents and get fresh material—current facts. One has constantly the great reservoir of facts in the valley upon which to draw, for use as occasion indicates, for supplementing and interpreting current facts, for argument, and for demonstration.

On this basis, therefore, Group I of the facts in the stories given above is described as current facts, and Group II as reservoir facts.

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A report of the finals in an annual track meet would be a current fact. A rehearsal of names and records of winners in the previous annual events would be a use of reservoir facts, as also would be a presentation of the growth and popularity of these games and their value in building strong manhood.

A statement concerning the giving of a speech and of the response of the audience to the speaker would present current facts. A description of why the speaker is noteworthy and of the relation of his appearance on the program to the purpose of the meeting would present reservoir facts.

Other examples will readily come to the reader's mind. What is to be emphasized here is the close relationship between the two classes of facts, at the same time noting that they have distinguishing values, and that the two may be effectively combined for making that appeal or interpretation which is the purpose of your informative effort.

If the current facts are properly selected and presented, they will attract interest; and if backed up by reservoir facts they will achieve that informing value which they cannot possess

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when standing alone, thus tending to gain the assent and cooperation of readers or hearers.

A question which naturally arises is: Does it necessarily follow that all current facts can be regarded as news?

This implies a basic and exceedingly important question, namely: "What is news?"

The difference between current and reservoir facts has been elaborated both as an introduction to and as a discussion of this part of our subject; for when it comes to the actual practice of information service it is found that many of those with whom the information bureau has to deal do not recognize news facts as such.

What appeals to one man as news may not appear at all in that light to another, and what may be news in one place may be past history elsewhere. Indeed, even newspapers disagree in some measure as to what is news, as will be seen by comparing two papers of the same date and noting the differences in the values they set upon the same piece of information. Many reasons can be offered in explanation, some having to do with the differing political com-

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plexions of the papers and the classes to whom they are purveyors of news.

All this emphasizes how carefully information service must be adjusted to meet differing conditions, and makes all the more clear why so many people do not find it easy to weigh news values—in other words to learn what is news and to whom it will be news.

One of the greatest difficulties which confronts the individual in charge of information service is the effort, by those to whom he is responsible, to interest him in the dissemination, as news, of facts which have no news value. These facts may have interest to those who bring them to the attention of the information bureau but be of such limited interest to the public that they cannot be accepted by editors.

This situation, which calls for constant watchfulness and the use of endless tact and patience, is not cause for astonishment. Even authorities disagree. In the newspaper profession itself it is held that “few men that have not gained their experience through long years of training know what is meant by the term ‘news.’ ”

This statement is on the authority of the late

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James McCarthy, of *The New York Herald*, who had the reputation of having trained more reporters than any other newspaper man in the country. His book "The Newspaper Worker" is, in the opinion of the authors, the most practical of all the books on news reporting that they have seen. It is unfortunate that the author's modesty led him to publish the book only as a personal venture and in a very limited quantity. It is now out of print.

Mr. McCarthy's statement need not exert a discouraging effect. The limitations imposed upon most welfare workers are evident. And they do not need personally to acquire all the knowledge and experience of the man who has spent a lifetime as reporter and editor, though fully recognizing their value.

The question "What is news?" is comparable to the question "What is poetry?" or "What is art?"—basic things which cannot be adequately defined, certainly not in any brief compass, and can only be satisfactorily demonstrated by the accomplishments of a genius. Thoroughgoing definition can only be achieved through perception and experience.

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But definitions can be found or formulated to serve all ordinary purposes. The Century Dictionary's definition of news is as follows:

“(1) A new or uncommon and more or less surprising thing; (2) a recent but not necessarily unexpected thing; (3) intelligence of something that has lately taken place or of something before unknown or imperfectly known.”

Adolph S. Ochs, owner of *The New York Times*, presents a significant definition when he says that “News is anything which informs.”

Will Irwin, in an address before the Foreign Policy Association in February, 1924, offered this: “News is any variation from the reader's picture of the normal.” He said this definition had been approved by editors to whom he had submitted it.

Mr. McCarthy had this to say on the question of news values: “News is always heightened in value when it is marked by the novel and the singular, the extraordinary or the unusual. The killing of a mechanic or day laborer seldom gets more than a paragraph unless the circumstances are extraordinary, but if the King of England falls down and fractures the royal

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ankle the incident is worthy of international note and is considered a good story.

“Again, a bewhiskered anarchist may shout that a bloody revolution alone can solve the industrial problem, and not a line of what he says will appear in the newspapers, but if the same sentiments are uttered from the pulpit of a Christian church the newspapers will devote much space to it.”

For our purposes, news is an event, occurrence, or development which at a given time will interest a large number of the particular group or groups to which we wish to make our appeal.

We may define it more precisely as a condition characteristic of facts when their relationship to other facts, and to time and place of presentation, establishes in them special values of freshness and interest to a certain group or groups.

Here an important distinction is to be noted. Recall the emphasis placed on the constructive value of the information which is to be disseminated. Unquestionably, if a crime were committed in your office by one of your workers, there would be no news value for your purposes

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in the tragedy, although it would have news value from the standpoint of the public. Stating it mildly, it would have no constructive value, and you would not be anxious to promulgate it although it would be your duty and the part of wisdom to permit and even assist the authorities and the newspapers in getting the actual facts.

One other feature in connection with the problem of determining what is news: The one most successful in perceiving news is one who is well informed, the man who is constantly in touch with his undertaking and his community. Moreover, to perceive news we must be aware of similar or related things in our immediate history or which have transpired very recently. A man rescued from a desert island would be in no position to pass on the news value of a fact until he had found out what had happened in that connection in the world of activities during his absence. Yet many people, really interested in their undertaking, place themselves in somewhat the position of such a castaway.

In connection with the need of keeping well-informed in order to perceive news and to ap-

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praise it with reasonable accuracy, the chart presented in connection with the subject of "Fields of Supply and Distribution" will be found helpful. The character and scope of these fields indicate the sources with which we should seek to keep in touch—sources which will develop and reveal a wealth of material from which to select and use facts of informative value.

The distinction between the two classes of facts, and the value of that distinction in perceiving and using news material, as presented here, has, we believe, the merit of being simple and yet practical. It helps to make all the more clear the meaning and purpose of information service, which must deal with passing facts but keep clearly in mind fundamentals and permanency.

VI.

COLLECTING FACTS

THE chart facing page 38 shows the scope and character of sources from which may be drawn facts for use in revealing and interpreting the aims and ideals of the organization. These sources abound in two classes of facts, described as current facts and reservoir facts.

In view of its sources of information, the volume and variety of its facts, and the groups to which these facts will appeal if properly presented, the welfare organization possesses unusual possibilities and opportunities for the gathering and dissemination of intelligence of human interest and value.

This condition indicates a responsibility: that welfare organizations have a real service to perform as collectors and distributors of information.

Recognizing the opportunity and obligation, the question at once arises: What are the basic

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rules and methods to be followed in collecting facts from their various sources?

We have already touched upon a number of guiding principles. The better informed we keep ourselves the better equipped we are to discern and obtain information. We should maintain the same attitude of mind when collecting our material—whether for use through the spoken, written, or printed word, or through pictures and exhibits—as when addressing our appeal to the employed personnel, lay officers, members, or various groups of the public.

The discussion of the actual application of this principle to the preparation and dissemination of facts must be taken up later. Let us keep clearly in mind, however, that no matter how advantageous it will be to draw upon the experience and methods of purely promotional undertakings—as we are doing and will continue to do—our problems and purposes differ from these in important respects. They call, it is true, for origination as well as adaptation of ideas and methods; and in addition, and most important of all, an unshakable determination that our information service shall reflect in con-

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ception and method the idealism of our organization.

To acquire information, to collect facts, we need trained and receptive minds and alert and sympathetic understanding. If we have these we will quite readily overcome a great difficulty which many people encounter, not merely that of observing with reasonable accuracy but, as the newspaper editor will tell you regarding the troubles of the cub reporter, in knowing what questions to ask. A successful reporter has learned how to get at the essential details which must be covered in obtaining a reasonably accurate picture of any given subject. Kipling's quatrain will help us:

“I keep six honest serving-men,
 (They taught me all I know) :—
Their names are What and Why and When
 And How and Where and Who.”

We are all daily and almost hourly facing the problem of ascertaining and presenting the truth. We seek to present our facts so that their significance shall be immediate and impressive. Let these “six honest serving-men”

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open up the essential features of a subject upon which we wish information and let them carry these essential features into our presentation of that subject. Put them on the job in spoken communications, letters, conferences, articles, and advertisements. They produce accuracy, clarity, and orderliness of understanding and presentation. When we achieve these things in a presentation our chances of convincing our hearers or readers are most promising.

Nothing can more surely lead an editor to reject an article than lack of essential details. By this is not meant cumbering a story with details that are trivial. Such details, and sometimes even those of some importance, can be left to the imagination, or at least consigned to the background.

A representative of a welfare organization sent from abroad a brief statement concerning a Russian refugee boy who, having been discovered and fathered by the crew of an American destroyer, had been turned over to the welfare organization in order that a plan for his future care might be worked out. The story contained all the basic elements of a human in-

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terest news story, useful as revealing a need and a service. But the information did not include the name of the boy, the name of the U. S. destroyer, nor the circumstances of his discovery. A letter to the welfare representative brought response in the shape of a picture of the lad (a useful detail), but none of the other essential data. Several months later a story covering the whole matter appeared in a paper published by the naval detachment to which the destroyer was attached, and a copy fell into the hands of the central office of the welfare organization in America. The picture, with a descriptive statement thus obtained, was then called to the attention of a news feature agency, which promptly requested that it be kept in mind when any more material as interesting as it regarded this to be might be available.

The story was still news in America when published, though months after the event, because it had not until then been published in this country, where it was of interest because of individuals concerned and its unique human interest. It was still useful as revealing a need and a service, but had the information been in sufficiently complete form for earlier publica-

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tion it would possibly have brought a more prompt and helpful response in determining the boy's future.

A prepared story lacking in essential details, submitted to an editor, not only is foredoomed to rejection but indicates to the editor that the purveyor of the story does not know how to present material. This is certainly not in the interest of future material that may be submitted from the same source.

One does not wish to be in much the same position as the cub reporter who fails, in covering a fire, to ascertain the name of the owner of the building, obtain an estimate of the financial damage, and find out if the property was insured. These are essential items. An estimate of financial damage in such a case, by the way, is a news fact; the matter of insurance a reservoir fact.

Not in every case is the lack of essential details a bar to the acceptance of a story. But when incomplete information is furnished, it is usually on the assumption that the editor will regard it as of such value, and that he has such facilities at his command for obtaining the addi-

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tional requisite data that he will arrange for covering the story through his own means.

Information of the return of a leader in a useful undertaking from a period of service or observation in other places or lands may be welcomed by an editor as an opportunity to send a reporter to obtain a first-hand interview.

Editors greatly prefer to retain—and many insist on retaining—initiative in the development of stories which are important enough to call for treatment by members of their own staffs.

In his collecting of facts the welfare worker has an essential part of the equipment for this work. For he is a specialist—presumably an alert and sympathetic specialist in his particular undertaking. He knows that there are many sources reasonably accessible to him for his supply of facts; and he knows the related facts, the reservoir facts, useful for the subject in hand or can get at them readily. Hence he should have little or no difficulty in obtaining and supplying accurate and essential details.

The importance of knowledge of related facts, or knowledge of where they may be read-

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ily found, is fully recognized in the field of journalism. Newspapers and current-affairs magazines employ and develop specialists. They have on their staffs men who devote themselves entirely to political reporting or to sporting news, or to handling religious information. Newspapers now and then practice the scheme exemplified by *The New York Evening Post* in sending its famous "colyumist," Christopher Morley, to report a particularly important big-league baseball game. They do so to reveal the humor inherent in the report of an event written by an individual who is anything but a specialist in the particular activity represented. But the newspaper never fails to include also the sporting specialist's report of the same event, for his report portrays the affair in its proper relationships, and thus is accurate and convincing.

Your information service can properly and effectively transcend the limits of your particular undertaking. The broad relationships and service of your organization can be emphasized and its value to mediums of distribution be enhanced if you can show that it has the sources

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for and is interested in purveying useful information which has no direct relationship with its own affairs.

The extensive contacts of any welfare organization make it inevitable that much information will come to it which is useful to the public, and we believe it has a duty to perform in this respect as well as an opportunity to improve its own relationships.

While one organization may be able to have upon its staff a man giving full time to information service, another may have to delegate it to a member of the staff who already has other duties. In some large organizations each department is responsible for its own publicity. While this may seem expedient, it is not to be recommended. Where the scheme is practised it is almost invariably the case that no program has been developed or that it is too loose to achieve coordination. It brings possible over-emphasis of one department or activity and a consequent under-emphasis of another. It tends to unfortunate competition in output. Several pieces of information issuing independently from separate sources within a

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single organization become rivals for the attention of the editor. More serious is the fact that quantity supply from any one general source is contrary to the principles of proper relationship with the mediums of public information. Coordination in distribution of information need not reduce initiative, however, on the part of officers and departments.

A considerable number of organizations include information service in the duties of their membership secretaries. While this particular combination of duties may have a certain expediency, we believe that it is not to be regarded as essentially indicated either by the relationship or the membership duties.

We hold the same view regarding the combination of publicity duties with those of any departmental officer whatsoever, recognizing fully at the same time that conditions in different cases may make the combination convenient, but only that. Experienced personnel officers, whom we have queried on this point, hold this view also.

We take this position because we are impressed with the grave mistake of identifying information service with some single phase of

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effort. In order to verify our own experience, we submitted a questionnaire to a number of men professionally engaged in welfare work. One question was: "Is the chief purpose of information service the enlargement of membership?" Fifty-five out of sixty answered "No." Another question was, "Is its chief purpose the cultivation of financial support?" Forty-eight out of sixty answered "No."

The majority passed by these questions and others of like import to give their general opinion that the major purpose of an information service should be to present the appeal of the undertaking as a whole.

Can that general appeal be consistently and adequately presented if information service is identified with any one department of organization activity? If it is so identified in practice, can we avoid giving editors and public an impression that it is a special thing we are seeking rather than a general educative and stimulative revelation of service and ideals?

The machinery for information service within the organization, whether local or general, should in our thought be as simple as possible

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and centralized at least as to authority and responsibility in the executive head. This authority should be direct and positive, not merely nominal. If the executive cannot employ a specialist for the information service our suggestion is that, as the responsible center for all the interests of the organization, he be at least the clearing channel for the general run of material, and that no subordinate be expected to give out information except under specific instructions from the executive.

There are few organizations of importance, however, which can afford to be without an experienced information officer, keeping in mind the distinction of such from a press agent. Through centralization of information responsibility, the relationship of the information service to all of the interests of the undertaking will be evident and the balance between one phase of the undertaking and another be maintained.

If the organization can employ a specialist for information service, the details of the service would naturally become the responsibility of the specialist, but no executive should expect

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the largest results who does not take his information specialist into the most intimate possible relationship. No matter how experienced or how alert the information specialist may be he cannot know his organization as he should know it if he is not given access to all reports, and admitted at least as an observer to councils and conferences of both principals and subordinates.

The information specialist must not only be trained in the technical problems of conveying information; he should be a person of such recognized wisdom and discretion that his ultimate relationship to the organization will be one of complete intimacy. Until this complete intimacy between the bureau of information and all of the departments of the organization is reached, the work of the bureau is handicapped and the service to the organization limited.

Do not employ a pilot if you are not prepared to trust him.

The broad-gauge information service head, while keeping before officers of other departments the wisdom and necessity of this cooperation and coordination, will at the same time create such a condition of interest and con-

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fidence that there will be constant initiative from them.

It is always preferable in passing out information verbally to set down in advance the facts which are regarded as necessary for proper understanding. The writing of the facts tends towards accuracy, and may be useful as providing a record for future reference. If there is no opportunity to do this, take time to marshal the facts in your own mind so that you may pass them out in an orderly and logical sequence, and let your "six honest serving-men" check them over before they pass beyond your control. The following rules may well be kept in mind in the process of collecting facts:

Nothing should be taken for granted. Unverified recollections and hearsay reports are dangerous.

Completeness and accuracy in names of persons, places, and dates are vital.

The facts collected in any given case should be sufficient to convince the unprejudiced hearer or reader.

The collecting of facts by the organization personnel should be so coordinated that there will be unity and continuity of effort.

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Records should be maintained with such accuracy and system that facts that should be immediately available are at hand.

Requests for information, even when they involve considerable detail, should be answered courteously and accurately.

Local problems of various kinds of organizations are peculiar and varied but the development and use of facts along the general lines here suggested will gain recognition and support in a comparatively short time.

VII.

PREPARING INFORMATION

THE purpose in information service and the nature of the fields to which the presentation of information is to be made are the primary considerations in determining the form in which facts are to be prepared for distribution. The service is, as has been pointed out, something more than that of a news agency. It is concerned not only with distributing facts but with using them for the exposition, the interpretation, of an ideal and a service.

Hon. Charles E. Hughes, in a speech at a dinner to President Angell of Yale University, held at Providence, R. I., in connection with the convocation at Brown University, October 9, 1923, pointed out that, "It is not the function of the university to develop mere mental agility, a craving for intellectual surprises, a dominant desire to be able to 'sell' something, to 'put something over.' " We should not only recog-

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nize that a properly conceived and conducted information service will have no such dominant desire; we should also avoid even the use of such phrases as "putting the story across." Whatever we mean by such phrases, they are the language and express the attitude of pure promotion. Secretary Hughes said further:

"In the world of slight attention, of content with fleeting impressions, of inaccuracies, when the daily food consists largely of rumors and conjectures so treated as to be indistinguishable from facts, where the truth is almost always belated and is apt to appear after keen interest has been lost, it is far more necessary than ever that our institutions should recognize that their chief function is to maintain the standards of sober and correct judgment and a fine disdain for those who make motion a substitute for thought."

In the preparation of information, adherence to this viewpoint does not discount the value of human interest and dramatic qualities. Indeed, it elevates them to their proper place and use.

The information specialist is occasionally subjected to temptations by those within the or-

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ganization who are somewhat too alert to opportunities for publicity. One form of temptation is to join in creating situations or sensations which may gain publicity. Space can be obtained in this way but the editor is on guard against this practice, and he who permits himself to enter into it will sooner or later find all his offerings under suspicion. Welfare work is too important, and it is too rich in human-interest values, to be permitted to suffer from artificial stimulation.

Another great temptation is controversy, the combating of unjust or ignorant statements. Some editors will welcome copy of this kind, or go so far as to suggest replies. The utmost wisdom and reserve is needed in correcting misstatements. The public soon tires of controversy. Do not be disturbed by criticism. It betokens interest. Emerson emphasizes the constructive effect of the most adverse criticism. Melville E. Stone has said that ample criticism brought about the success of the Associated Press.

The practice of information service should be an expository process.

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What is exposition? It has been defined as that form of discourse whose purpose is to make clear to the intellect an idea or related group of ideas. That is its scientific aspect. It means that we fail in exposition if our material is not clear and convincing.

Our exposition must also have the artistic quality of disciplined form and the ethical quality of social value.

Clear, convincing, logical, ethical—these are what exposition is properly expected to be. Are these the sum total of qualities which exposition for welfare purposes must possess? At least one additional, inclusive quality is needed—the quality of attractiveness.

Noting the essential relationship of these qualities to our exposition, there is one underlying principle which merits emphasis above all others in connection with the preparation and use of our facts. These chapters will have failed in their purpose if that principle be not left as the chief impression. It is this:

No use of our facts should be made without some indication, direct or implied, of the spiritual values of the or-

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ganization or undertaking to the individual, the community, or both.

The necessity of qualifying any general rule is manifest, but this is presented as a sound, general principle, inherent indeed in the code of practice of any informative effort which is of permanent value to society. Its application is the practical expression of faith in the appeal to idealism. Recall in this connection the statement offered in discussing the difference between information service and promotion: Information service falls to the level of ordinary publicity, legitimate though that publicity may be, if it fails to reveal the spiritual purpose of the undertaking and fails to contribute to the achievement of that purpose. If it does not do these things it is not only inadequate but misleading.

One whose practice is rooted in this conception in any field cannot be rightly declared impractical. A single illustration calls to mind many others. John Wanamaker began selling men's clothing in Philadelphia under existing trade conditions, when trade meant in reality barter and exchange. Purchases were effected

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by bargaining. There were no fixed prices and a successful transaction was an exploit. There must have been some sense of personal satisfaction; there must also have been an insecurity, a wondering whether the best possible bargain had been made. John Wanamaker marked his prices in plain figures and adhered to the marked prices. This was something new—a reversal of the trading methods of the time. Whether recognized as such or not, it was the acceptance in business relations of a spiritual need which had caused men to struggle for centuries—the need for equality of opportunity. Here was a store where all purchasers were treated as equals. Today fixed prices are standard business practice.

The public is ever ready to respond to the idealistic appeal to a degree that will justify the appeal from the practical as well as the spiritual point of view. The world stands at this time of its history on the threshold of a new era of understanding and of service.

Closeness to one's work often limits or distorts one's perspective, so that there is value in noting the views of men who come here from

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abroad and receive fresh impressions. Bergson, the great French philosopher, following his last visit to the United States, expressed the opinion that America is not a nation of dollar-chasers but one whose people are keen to obtain money that it may be spent ideally. Professor Emanuel Radl of the University of Prague, and Senator Klofac, formerly Vice-President of the Czechoslovak Senate, have each expressed themselves regarding the ideals and practice of service of the American people as remarkable and inspiring because apparently innate in their character.

Dr. Arthur T. Hadley, former president of Yale University, has recently written: "The pursuit of the dollar in American business is conducted with more spectacular intensity than it is in most parts of Europe. To pursue wealth for the sake of the luxuries which it will buy means materialism. But as we go up in the scale of uses the materialistic motive is gradually crowded out and intellectual and moral purposes become dominant. Now only a very small part of the wealth amassed by Americans is intended to be spent for luxuries. . . . The increase of luxury is more noticeable among our

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unassimilated foreign elements of every class in society than among those who have come under the influence of our national ideals.”

James Wright Brown, publisher of *Editor and Publisher*, has indicated his opinion that the idealism of the American public must make increased efforts to express itself through the newspapers.

Many stories appear in newspapers on boys' camps. In few cases is there any indication of the value of these camps except as means for having good times and building health. These are exceedingly important things, but are these stories sufficient in this form? We believe the strongest appeal to parents has been omitted. Recreation is vital, health is vital, but more vital than these is that the growing boy shall have the opportunity to learn under proper association and leadership those personal standards and ideals of democracy which are becoming more and more essential in the life of America and of the world.

An attractive and artistic poster may increase membership, and to that extent be an effective method of publicity. But do we believe in de-

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voting, and do we believe it is essential to devote, all the space on a membership poster to a statement of privileges and equipment facilities if these do not represent the underlying purpose of the organization? Is there a welfare organization of any sort, no matter what its primary purpose, which does not directly or indirectly indicate something of a proper attitude toward life? Is it conceivable that the American people will resent the proper statement of these things? Could not a line be added to the membership poster, with appeal based on privileges, pointing out that clean, healthy bodies help to make clean, useful men? Perhaps these very words would fill the need on occasion.

There will be occasion in a later talk to go more fully into advertising. But it is well here to ask whether we should hesitate to advertise the purpose which is basic in our welfare undertakings.

In this discussion of the expository function of information service, place need not be given to a presentation of rules which can be found in textbooks dealing with the art of composition.

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Each one of us may with good results take down our old textbook from its dusty shelf and refresh our mind on the rules of an art which we are all using every day of our lives. Let us simply recall at least three qualities which those rules emphasized, namely, clarity, conciseness, unity.

The diffuseness of an ordinary statement, whether spoken or written, is evident. Powers of forceful presentation can be increased if a few standards considered essential in effective journalistic effort are applied. Several of the following are borrowed or paraphrased from the late James McCarthy of *The New York Herald*:

The clear statement of a single fact of value is more effective than the most labored description.

Come directly to the point. In a novel the denouement is the last thing described; in a news report the denouement is the news.

Never over-state. There is an emphasis in under-statement.

Be impartial and unprejudiced in presentation.

The presentation of the fact and the revela-

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tion of its value is more important than getting the name of the organization itself into print.

For simplicity and effectiveness of exposition, Bible readers have constantly before them the greatest pattern that is known. In all the literature of the ages—the works of the Greek poets, the Roman orators, the French romantics—there is no example of presentation and exposition which equals the Bible. The letters of Paul are today cited as models of exposition.

Bruce Barton, speaking before a group at the New York Advertising Club in December, 1921, made the statement that to every new man whom he employs as a writer of advertising copy he makes a little speech. In this he tells him that if he wants to read a book which will help him become an effective writer he should turn to the New Testament.

“It is a significant thing,” said Mr. Barton, “that the only prayer that a large mass of human beings have ever mastered is the Lord’s Prayer, which is only seventy-six words long; and the only great oration that has been mastered by a great mass of Americans is Lincoln’s

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Gettysburg address, which is only 265 words long.” Mr. Barton said further:

“The Bible is a guide to the fact that if we are going to reach a large number of people and reach them effectively, we will have to do so in short, crisp, simple language.

“Jesus dealt with very simple folks, with folks who did not have much of an education, and I think the most significant thing about the success of His teaching is revealed in the verse in which it is said, ‘Without a parable He taught them nothing.’

“If we are going to catch hold of the imagination of large numbers of people we have got to do it with the specific. We cannot deal in generalities, but we have got to deal in what Jesus called parables, and what we advertising men call specific cases.”

Mr. Barton pointed to *The War Cry*, published by the Salvation Army. “I believe,” he said, “that not as a textbook in grammar or in fine writing, but simply as a guide to the dedication and effective use of human interest material that little paper is worth an occasional purchase and reading on the part of us all.”

Guidance in preparation of material is available in the experience and methods of professional reporters. When we say “reporters” we do not limit the word to the newspaper profes-

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sion but to all who have expressed or are expressing through writing their trained faculties as observers, commentators, and interpreters of events, conditions, and places.

Modern literature, in addition to modern news journalism, is replete with examples which teach and inspire. We have the journalistic examples of the great war correspondents such as George Villiers, Richard Harding Davis, Frederick Palmer, Sir Philip Gibbs. But let us remember also such writings as Stanley's "In Darkest Africa"; Robert Louis Stevenson's "Canal Trip Through Belgium" and "Travels with a Donkey"; William Dean Howells' "Letters from Venice"; John Ruskin's "Stones of Venice" and "Mornings in Florence"; Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad"; Emerson's "English Traits"; Washington Irving's "Spanish Essays."

The ideal publicity article would be one written concerning a particular thing for a particular paper, and written for that paper alone. That principle is manifestly and by proof of experience the surest method of providing acceptable material. Information in hand will occa-

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sionally be of such immediate importance as to call for prompt distribution to newspapers or news bureaus. But whenever possible it should be submitted to one editor, indicating that it is intended for his exclusive use and requesting its return if not suitable for his purposes.

The purpose of information service is not to get the name of an organization mentioned as many times as possible. Any organization can more surely obtain the space to which it is entitled, achieve more effective results thereby, if in preparing material it uses its own name in a very modest way. A mention of the name but once or twice in an article ought to be sufficient. A person working for a welfare organization is working for the public. History has not yet pointed out any single organization as the savior of society.

Your information service will build increasing good-will among editors and publishers and with the public generally if it pursues policies which can claim the fullest respect of all interests concerned.

Above all things do not try to trick an editor, by any form of indirection, into using mate-

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rial, and do not expect him to use articles from anonymous sources. If it is material which for one reason or another should be used at a certain time, or material of importance which is being submitted to several papers in identical form, indicate in an upper corner a release date.

If material submitted is itself of such quality, and its physical character such, that both meet the conditions of editorial utility, its prospects of getting into the printed columns are excellent. No editor sits at his desk to turn away copy. The search is constant and keen for worth-while copy of interest to the group of readers whom the editor represents. If copy is physically attractive and properly prepared it carries with it the impression of worthiness. If it is interesting it has gained for its source a recognition which will be helpful in the future, and increasingly so if subsequent material is held to high standards.

VIII.

DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION

THE general methods and mediums of collecting and distributing information were indicated on the chart prepared to show the fields of supply and distribution. These are:

1. Personal contacts.
2. The written word.
3. The printed word.
4. Pictures, bulletin boards, and exhibits.

The personal contact as a medium of communication employs both the spoken word and the forces of personality and example, and is the most powerful individual influence. We must recognize in the personal contact the most important medium of information.

The first experience of every welfare worker is in personal contacts, and he is daily adding to his experience in the use of this method of influence. He is in this and numerous other ways

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a personal information service, for it is his inescapable duty and opportunity to present in his words and deeds an exposition of his ideals and the service of his organization.

The personal relationships of the welfare worker are in every case actually or potentially wide and varied to an extraordinary degree. The value of wide acquaintanceship is self-evident. Welfare workers develop such in their regular activities, but each one should consider whether he is extending and developing his acquaintanceships and relationships along the most effective channels. Are we, for example, making ourselves useful in other organizations in our community besides our own? The material, the opportunities, the channels awaiting development in our own fields of service, respond the most quickly; and the ordinary problems involved solve themselves the more readily and surely for the man of wide understanding and relationship.

Let us illustrate the last statement. Very many welfare organizations are in a position to enlist for the purpose of information service men who by training or influence are fitted to

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serve as advisors and as developers of useful relationships. It is a significant commentary on the failure of many organizations to conduct their informative efforts along constructive lines that only a small minority have such advisory committees. Inquiry among sixty organizations revealed such committees in only ten. Yet more than a third reported that they had newspaper or magazine owners or editors on their regular boards or other committees.

It is not necessary that all members of such a committee should be associated with publications or with any related work. In addition to technical advice, wide and varied points of view are desirable. The committee should include men of wisdom and influence in other undertakings in the community. They should all be men who are convinced of the importance of properly interpreting the organization to the public, and who are willing to use their own relationships to develop the organization's opportunities for this purpose.

An advisory committee of any sort is intended to be of double service. Its advice is a service; there is an added benefit if its members are led to take an interest in their work beyond

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the giving of counsel. An advisory committee on information service can be made in both ways a particularly active and useful committee.

Not all organizations by any means can readily find individuals who are equipped or willing to serve in direct relationship to information service. Some, perhaps many, directors or trustees have little or no conception of information as distinguished from publicity, and because of a lack of understanding are blind to the opportunities and obligations of any form of information service. The worker then has an additional and imperative problem on his hands, the problem of educating such men, carefully and patiently, to such a conception of information service that they will recognize the work both as a duty and an opportunity. He should also go about it to add to his committee men in sympathy with the undertaking whose previous experience gives them an understanding of advertising and news values.

The functions of the committee are to advise on the planning and conduct of the information service, to keep in touch with its progress, and to help open up means of access to the points of

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distribution. The committee should not be expected to revise copy. There is real danger here. There may be advisory members who would feel it to be their duty and insist upon it to some extent. Experience has repeatedly proved that, when a piece of copy passes through several editings, by different individuals, it becomes so purged as to be in danger of dying of pernicious anæmia, or that by the time it has received an official O. K. its timeliness will have passed.

The advisory committee should lead in outlining general policies, and while copy should be prepared with exquisite care as to facts and form and placed in accordance with the accepted policies, the entire responsibility for the quality of the copy should rest upon one person. Too much emphasis cannot be placed, however, on maintaining the constant interest of the committee regarding principles, relationships, and the opening up of channels of distribution.

The written word is the next heading on the chart. As used here, the words have to do with letters and related methods of correspondence, including circular letters and report letters.

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Next to the personal contact, communication by correspondence is probably the most effective method of conveying information, although it can cover only a restricted field.

In a letter, approach is made to a selected audience, whether it be a single individual or a group. Being acquainted as a rule with the general character and attitude of mind of the person or persons to whom we are writing, we are able to make use of a style of presentation which we believe will catch their attention and impress them. In a letter we can be informal, intimate, and even confidential in tone, which gives emphasis to our exposition or appeal.

The personal letter gives a freedom from limitations which seem sometimes to reduce our prospects of effectiveness when we use the printed word as our medium. There is a danger in this latitude. Who has not seen letters—circulated among a considerable group—which are sloppily expressed, long, diffuse, perhaps lamely humorous or smugly religious, or reeking with a gratuitous hand-on-your-shoulder intimacy? And you wonder whether such a letter has not assured the wreck of every hope that its author or anyone else may have had for the un-

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dertaking concerned. Turn the author of such a letter to the preparation of an article which is to be put into printed form and he is likely to make a dignified presentation and one which may reap some good results where his typewritten epistle begets only annoyance or derision. Why his change of style? Because, consciously or unconsciously, he recognizes certain limitations involved in the preparation of the printed word but recognizes only the liberties afforded by the other medium, the written word.

In the chart special place is given to lay committees and constituency as a part of the field of distribution. The report letter is a valuable means of communicating information to these groups. It is evident that reports of this kind can be formal and dry as dust, or on the other hand intimate and appealing, giving emphasis to facts by the very informality of their presentation. This form of presentation implies that the recipient is especially entitled to the information.

A report letter from a welfare source which has come to our attention opens as follows:

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“My dear Mr. So-and-So: Three months ago you made an investment, and you are entitled to know what return that investment is bringing in.”

Then follows a chatty but business-like description of what had been done and what was planned, with the following at the close:

“In view of what has been accomplished and the plans now being matured, we hope you will feel that your investment is a paying one. We believe that it is, because we know that the work of this organization in this community has been definitely helped by your cooperation.”

A letter in that spirit and tone is effective, not only from the standpoint of keeping a contributor interested but in educating him, and through him educating others as to the service and ideals of the organization. There is nothing original in this method; but if it is used consistently and to the extent which it should be used in any organization's relationships with lay officers and contributors, it will bring good results. It is human for these men to feel that they have a right to expect more intimate information than can be offered in printed reports.

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A common criticism of trustees or directors, whether of business or welfare organizations, is that they do not take their responsibilities seriously; in other words that they do not direct. Experience indicates that, like all sweeping statements, that statement is a half truth. Unquestionably there are directors and trustees who apparently value their connection with an undertaking only when their attention is called to the fact that they have not been attending to business and that as a consequence someone else is to replace them.

There is, however, a very definite responsibility resting upon the employed officers of any undertaking to see to it that the trustees or directors are properly informed. The letter and written report, followed up by personal telephone calls and personal interviews, are most effective.

Consideration should be given to special letters for church, civic, and fraternal organizations.

Frequently these organizations have bulletins of their own which should be studied for the purpose of providing them with information suitable for their use.

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The church bulletin, or simple church calendar, offers prospects worth considering in this day when the social gospel is being emphasized. Announcements of speakers and items concerning members of the particular church who are also members of your organization can find place in such organs.

An important feature in letters of whatever kind is that they be reasonably short—rather too short, surely, than too long. Anyone who has had experience in editing news letters and report letters will ordinarily find little difficulty in reducing them by at least twenty per cent without rephrasing them. That is to say, these reductions can be made by merely striking out superfluous words or phrases from the material, thus emphasizing the message without rewriting. By rephrasing further reductions are frequently possible.

Certain rules can be effectively applied to letters of all kinds. Ten points of an effective business letter were given by Charles H. Mackintosh, of La Salle Extension University, at the convention of the Associated Advertising

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Clubs of the World in 1919. They have such general application that we quote them:

Plan

Knowledge of the subject.

Knowledge of the object.

Knowledge of the prospect.

Text

Is it complete?

Is it logical?

Is it concise?

Is it forceful?

Is it sincere?

Form

Is it neat?

Is it accurate?

A well-phrased letter, containing pertinent and interesting announcements, may receive only slight attention because of its physical appearance. The use of imitation typewritten letters is a subject upon which there has been much discussion. For a small list we are emphatically in favor of a personal letter signed by the principal. For a larger list we incline toward printed matter rather than the imitation of a personal form.

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The printed word, as the term is here used, comes particularly within the province of this discussion, and may be approximately defined as embracing all material technically known as "copy." In that connection one naturally thinks first of its relationship to the newspapers.

Suggestion has already been made, in comments on the advisory committee, of the possibility of opening up pathways of various kinds. One of the most important of these is a proper relationship with the newspaper office, although this—theoretically, at least—should not be necessary, as the newspaper employs agents to search out and report the news.

Responses to a questionnaire show that a large group of organization workers have found local newspapers receptive. It could not be otherwise. As a center of human interest any welfare organization should be one of the most vital news sources in the community.

When a welfare organization is of such character and size as to operate through separate units at many local points, a question to be determined is whether information of value to the general news press should be distributed direct

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from the central office to the papers or through the local offices to the local papers. News of immediate importance cannot await this relay method without losing value; it may require immediate dispatch to the news bureau; but there is much information which finds a logical and effective distribution by this method. It gives opportunity for the local office of the welfare organization to adapt the material for local presentation, while at the same time conveying to that office information which might not otherwise reach it. Moreover, it fosters both initiative and cooperation on the part of the welfare officers at the various local points and helps towards a mutual growth in the understanding and practice of right principles of information service.

In communities other than the large cities, news of real value can often be called directly to the attention of the city editors by telephone or personal visit. The editor will know at once whether it is material he can use and, if approving it, will say either that he will send a reporter to get the details of the story, or will request that the details be given verbally or a story prepared and submitted.

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Reporters do not have roving commissions. They are given special assignments or special fields whose news they are expected to cover. The proper relationship with the reporter and his paper will not be fostered by running after him or seeking to impress him with any idea of getting something for nothing. He will appreciate evidence of your desire and alertness to turn over to him information which his paper will welcome. Ask him the kinds of news and information his newspaper would like to have from you and assure him of your desire to provide that material, or to aid in getting it, especially in the field of your own particular interest.

Has the door of your private office been open to newspaper reporters? Have you considered questions from reporters as impertinences? Have you been somewhat timid in meeting them? Have you been a little superior to them? Have you taken the trouble when a reporter inquires for information, instead of referring him to someone else, to get the information for him yourself? Have you looked upon the newspaper reporter as a prospective working member of your organization? Have you considered

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it worth-while use of your time to help him get the facts?

If practicable, make an occasional call upon local editors and maintain an acquaintanceship with them. This will give an opportunity not only to indicate directly to them some of the worth-while things that your organization is doing and at the same time review its general policies, but also to obtain their counsel and suggestions.

Not a few welfare organizations have such well-developed relationships with local newspapers that the latter permit them to conduct regular departments. This arrangement merits most careful treatment. Bend every effort to make each such department worthy of the reader's attention. The attractive one is the exception. The material in many is poorly selected and poorly written. Much bears evidence of having been done with scissors and paste. Because a newspaper here and there may accept such stuff is no excuse for laziness and sloppiness.

In dealing with newspapers make sure that the material you wish them to print reaches them

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on time. Get a local editor to tell you just when he would like to have material reach him, whether intended for use on the same day or the next day.

The use of pictures for informative purposes and the use of periodicals, of other forms of printed matter, and of exhibits will be treated later.

The school as a field of distribution is the next detail on the chart. You unquestionably have in mind the value of relationships with the school board, school superintendent, and school principal and teachers.

The school bulletin boards offer possibilities, and school publications may be occasionally receptive to special items.

There is an interesting problem in the distribution of information to employers and employes. The news letter, and occasional printed matter in poster or pamphlet or folder form, seem to be the logical mediums for reaching any considerable part of the group at one time.

In this connection a study of the publication of the local chamber of commerce or commercial club may prove valuable. Such a publication

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has employers among its readers, and occasional material in it would reach a group whose cooperation you may be seeking.

The use of technical literature, such as books and periodicals, will be discussed in the next chapter.

IX.

PUBLICATIONS AND PRINTED MATTER

SOME of the largest of the religious and welfare organizations are not merely publishers and distributors of books, but are owners of large printing plants. No discussion will be attempted here of the policy to be followed in printing and publication of books except to indicate the obvious, which is that every great movement inevitably creates a literature which is necessary to its members, particularly to its workers. It is incumbent upon the worker to be in close touch with all publications of his organization and kindred enterprises.

It is recognized by all directly concerned with the subject that a fresh impulse and new emphasis have been developed in recent years in books which are aids to the art and science of welfare and religious work and right living. Religious books themselves are no longer always labeled theology or thought of as such.

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There are many inspirational volumes that have no relationship whatever to theology, but which emphasize principles and methods for successful service and living.

These books are therefore regarded as a means for helping anyone and everyone towards an ideal for which the particular organization stands. They emphasize the importance and necessity of books as tools for the worker. No welfare worker can expect the largest results from his efforts who does not give books their due place in his equipment.

The tests which an organization applies to a book are these: Is it the kind of book which its workers need in order to improve the effectiveness of their work? Or (for another class of books) are they the kind which would be of help in understanding and applying the ideals of the organization? The tendency or the effort nowadays is to develop these books out of the actual experience of individuals and of groups, and to present them in a way which will combine clarity with usefulness.

Anything which promotes the efficiency and effectiveness of the movement broadens the opportunity for information service and increases

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its power of expression. Books are a final storehouse of facts and ideas. It is to books that we must turn for a background for all of our information service. It will be recognized that one who would be a leader in information service cannot limit his reading to the books of his own organization or even to those dealing with its kind and realm of work.

You have been pleased when a friend has handed you a marked copy of a book or magazine and indicated that in reading it he was so impressed with a passage that he wanted to pass it on to you and possibly discuss it with you. Most men feel complimented by such attention, and welfare workers can use it to good advantage. Our thought is not necessarily a gift of the volume or magazine. Indeed, the loan of a book with emphasis on the value which you place upon it and your desire to preserve it will tend to make a stronger impression than an off-hand gift.

The reader need scarcely be reminded of the positive method of widening influence by using books as a background for study and discussion groups, both within and without the organization.

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Many of the largest organizations, by reason of their size and the variety of their activities, have proven the need of some fixed method of giving current information on various subjects. This has led to the development of periodicals which are commercially known as house organs, though some have gone so much beyond the limitations of the specific field of the organization that they have grown to be important journalistic undertakings with large general circulation lists. There have been repeated efforts to establish publications of this kind, the subscription to which is included in the membership fee and therefore involuntary.

The competition in the general field of periodicals is so keen that this method of including them as part of the membership fee is extremely dangerous unless quality is maintained at a very high standard. It is a dangerous presumption to assume that your membership or constituency is so devoted to the undertaking that it will perforce be interested in a mediocre publication. Better a periodical printed report than a futile or amateurish attempt at journalism. The large majority of actual or prospective readers are extremely discriminating. It

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is a small minority who will read unsuccessful attempts at journalism if it appeals to them only as a matter of duty to do so.

The pressure upon the reading public is constantly increasing. Competition for the public's attention is enormous and intense. If one is asked to read an organization's periodical, those responsible for that publication must know that the material submitted to the reader is thoroughly worthy of his attention, is accurate and informative and stimulating, and in form of presentation attains a standard which justifies its competing against numerous other publications for the reader's time.

Usefulness implies form of presentation as well as content. If it can be said with confidence that these requirements can be constantly and persistently attained, then the organization can feel justified in proceeding with its periodical.

In the house organ of the local organization is found a subject of direct interest and concern to many individual organizations and to every worker within them. The pressure upon the time of the local worker is intense, and in any case it is impossible for him and his associates

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to keep in close touch through personal contacts and letters with each individual in the lay committees, membership, and general constituency. He turns, therefore, to some general method of disseminating information.

Observation of the general welfare field indicates the following general reasons why many organizations do not publish house organs:

They do not need a printed periodical, finding other methods adequate for their purposes.

They have not the technical equipment for editing and publishing.

The financing of a periodical is too burdensome.

A national publication issued from the central office may be used in a way which makes a local publication unnecessary.

On the other hand a large number of local periodicals are being produced by organizations which find, as constant or frequent problems, the considerations we have just enumerated.

The life of the editor of a local house organ is not altogether an undisturbed one, and the problems which he has to face are precisely those which the organization must find ways of

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solving before it attempts to establish a periodical.

The problem of the local periodical is the more important in that many of the existing publications are properly subject to severe criticism both as regards form and content. The basic question is whether the periodical will be an investment or an expense of both time and money for the publisher as well as the reader. Some of the publishers have attempted to solve the question of expense by advertising. Bert Barnes, who is an authority on house organs, has commented as follows on a group of these publications:

“I don't know why these carry advertisements. If you will make a study of them, calculating the time and trouble it takes to obtain them, the bad appearance they give to the pages of your publications, and the questionableness of their being a paying investment to the advertiser, I think you will find it advantageous not to carry them.”

The business man in any community is subject to almost endless pressure from many directions for giving direct or indirect financial support to many sorts of undertakings. He often feels compelled to place advertising to retain

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friendships or to avoid annoyance, reasonably sure that his advertisement will bring no material profit and that he is making a disguised contribution to an undertaking instead of an investment to promote his business. The feeling of a man towards a contribution of that kind cannot but be one of distaste.

Not all local organization periodicals carry advertising, but it is questionable whether even a majority of those doing so can properly claim the interest of advertisers. If it is not commercially profitable for a business man to advertise in such a publication, he should not be solicited for that purpose.

It is better to publish a bulletin for free distribution than to attempt a publication whose subscription list is so limited in number that the business man, knowing the value of per capita circulation and the comparative values of different publications for advertising, would prefer not to support it by purchasing space in it.

It is preferable, if in need of financial support, to go to a man and tell him so frankly, rather than to seek to obtain the cash by in-

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direction or by selling him something which he feels is not worth what he pays for it.

It is required by law that at least half of the material published by local periodicals which utilize second-class mailing privileges shall be general matter. In nearly all cases the local post-master interprets the law as meaning that its provisions will be satisfied if half of the material in a local publication deals with affairs of the organization having more than local bearing.

In order to meet this problem, as well as the needs of other local publications without second-class mailing privileges, a central bureau of information can supply many of them, at their request, with material that is of more than local interest. This is done by submitting to the editors of these periodicals at regular intervals groups of short articles which may be as useful to one periodical as to another.

This material need not always bear directly upon the specific purposes and service of the organization. Experience has shown that interest in these periodicals may be increased if reference is made to affairs outside the organ-

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ization which are consistent with its own and the public's interests.

This method suggests various possibilities in standardization which would make possible further economies and increase the effectiveness of a common informative effort. For example: A considerable saving might be effected in half-tone illustrations and line-cuts of notables and activities within the interests of the whole organization. But it is evident that before such a standardizing of material there would have to be physical uniformity among the local periodicals. There cannot be standardized measurements in illustrations unless page-sizes and column-widths among the several publications are in accord.

An alert personnel will constantly have in mind the relationship between publications of the organization and the local membership and larger public. Few organizations can afford to give copies of their publications to all whom they would like thus to reach. But the workers in their reading can have in mind the lay officers and other committee-men, members, local pastors, and other individuals whose interest and cooperation are desired.

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The ideal organization publication would be of such quality that its list of subscribers would include every worker, member, and supporter; even then, officers and workers should still be on the alert to call the attention of others both within and without the organization to specific articles, impressing on them the desirability of widening their influence by interesting others in that publication. An article, selected and passed along, or torn from a copy kept for the purpose, at times brings large results. Some organizations, with good effect, post special articles, covers, and illustrations on their bulletin boards.

The subject of sporadic reading matter—by which we mean booklets, leaflets, posters, and similar material—offers so wide and varied a field for comment and discussion that we make no pretense of covering it adequately.

In connection with printed matter, large organizations may well consider the value of standardization of ideas, methods, and physical make-up, where this can be brought about. No man of originality wishes to bind himself to the absolute; but there are large possibilities

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through the interchange of ideas and in unity of service for economizing in time, efforts, and dollars, and at the same time gaining in efficiency and effectiveness.

Standardization is possible not only in local house organs ; there are various types of printed matter which can be made uniform in content and form. It is just as practical to standardize certain forms of printed matter as to standardize methods, buildings, and equipment.

In a series of standardized leaflets there should be such a variety of material and style and format that the recipient would get no impression of sameness or monotony. Standardized literature could be localized by adding the imprint of the local organization or other appropriate local material.

In addition to revealing spiritual values, there should be frequent indication in the printed matter of the welfare organization that its service is more than a detached undertaking. The appeal can properly be made to a special group or groups, but it will be strengthened if it is shown that the particular undertaking is part of a far-reaching and progressive work.

X.

ILLUSTRATIONS VERSUS PHOTOGRAPHS

WHAT is fundamental to the presentation of information by means of words is equally applicable to pictures as mediums of communication.

Pictures have taken an important and conspicuous position in the life of today. As H. H. Fisk, president of the Western Newspaper Union, puts it, "Most people today are eye-minded; they used to be ear-minded." He is thinking not only of pictorial illustrations, but the insistence upon vividness and attention-impelling methods of many kinds. But the pictorial illustration is the chief expression of these methods.

One thinks immediately, in turning to this subject, of the popularity of the movies and of the pictorial supplements issued by our newspapers. The chief purpose of both is entertainment, but their subject matter and presentation are often such as to disturb thoughtful people.

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There is neither truth nor art in appeals to morbid curiosity and cheap sentimentality.

Personal interest in a picture does not establish its news informative value. Welfare officers profoundly interested in their work are naturally inclined to over-emphasize the importance of pictures of persons or scenes intimately connected with their special work. People living among scenes or incidents that they know to be strange to their principals send in many pictures intensely interesting to themselves and also to their principals, but which are not suitable for publicity purposes, even in intimate reports. The selection of pictures for informing and interesting others is a matter of long technical training.

Pictures are subjected by newspapers and news picture syndicates to the same valuation as other forms of news. What may have news value in one locality or country may not have sufficient news value elsewhere to warrant its use.

The following letters were received in response to requests made to several picture editors of metropolitan newspapers. Although they relate mainly to pictures taken by welfare

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workers in foreign lands, the suggestions are of more general pertinence.

Frank A. Eaton, *New York Tribune*:

“In the first place, unless the event or person pictured is of unusual importance I give preference to picture subjects in this order of classification: local, national, foreign. I believe, for instance, that our readers would prefer seeing a photograph of a New York Y. M. C. A. secretary painting a red triangle on a flagpole at the top of the Woolworth Building rather than a Y. M. C. A. secretary teaching a benighted Hindu the benefits to be derived from a toothbrush. Mayor Hylan shooting marbles in the shadow of Civic Virtue is of more interest to people than his honor beaming in a Fifth Avenue grandstand as he reviews a St. Patrick’s Day parade. . . . The less the pictures savor of publicity the better chance they have. You might emphasize the increased publication possibilities of close-ups rather than long shots, human interest rather than scenic effects, oddities rather than the conventional. . . . Supply complete data on each picture so that adequate captions can be written, remembering that oftentimes the caption will put over a rather commonplace picture.”

Raymond H. Torrey, *New York Evening Post*:

“I should think that pictures which your representatives could take or obtain would be most at-

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tractive here if they related to something in current news, or were likely to fit expected developments in events in the social or political history of new or changing countries of Europe and Asia. Such pictures need not omit reference or connection with the work, but it would be better if that end were not too obviously stressed. If there was reason to use the name and objects in the caption, that would serve your purposes, I suppose.

“Too many of the pictures relating to American agencies working abroad are of stiff groups, without much action, or of buildings or other still life, with little attractiveness. There is so much competition nowadays among picture agencies, and graphic editors have so many good pictures offered them, in relation to what they have room for, that a photograph must be definitely interesting and attractive to find a place, and the fact that a picture illustrates the work of some worthy organization is not alone enough to ‘get it by.’ ”

Charles M. Graves, *New York Times*:

“Such photographs [from workers in foreign lands], if selected with care, can readily be used by the various newspapers of the country, but in almost all cases they should have news value first; that is, they should be connected with a definite news event of national or international importance, and consequently should be clear and sharp, and should have

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artistic qualities. Practically no newspapers in this country whether in their daily editions or in their illustrated sections use any pictures now that have not distinct news value."

A healthy and hopeful sign is that, along with the moving picture and the heavily increased use of pictures generally, there has developed a group of serious commentators and critics. Indeed public opinion itself has been aroused to dangers in the situation, and we see the response and the business acumen of the motion-picture industry in employing Will H. Hays as the head of the Producers and Distributors Association. Mr. Hays presents a conception of the function of motion pictures with which we all probably agree. The industry, he says, is now visualized as a great three-fold instrument for good. "It can," he states, "fill a necessity—the necessity for entertainment. Second, it can and will instruct—which is a most precious power. Third, it can do more than any other agency to unite the peoples of the world, to bring understanding not only between man and man, but between nation and nation, than which no greater thing can be done."

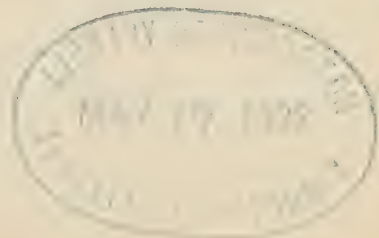
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Serious problems involved here, certainly, are so to develop the instructive utility of the movie that it will popularize pictorial instruction and yet not weaken or deaden voluntary constructive thinking based on other forms of presentation. But we would emphasize this point: Pictures unquestionably have a usefulness for conveying information which can be exerted without prejudice or injury to other useful forms of communication, and indeed can supplement and aid and enrich these other forms to sound advantage.

Pictures for the purposes of information service must illustrate. To illustrate is to make clear or intelligible, to explain by example.

Not every photograph, then, is an illustration.

An ideal illustration evidently would be one which told its story so clearly that it would need no caption. One of the moving pictures which has received the most praise from authoritative critics is Charles Ray's "The Old Swimmin' Hole," which did not carry a subtitle from beginning to end, the principle being that the ideal moving picture explains itself.



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The lesson is clear that in taking pictures for the purposes of information service every possible effort should be made to have them convey the story so surely and vividly that all that is necessary in addition is the briefest sort of caption. That is a general rule, without prejudice to the many legitimate exceptions wherein fairly long captions are desirable. Captions themselves can be made entertaining, instructive, stimulating—one or all of these things, as opportunity offers.

Great care should be exercised in the matter of captions. Never send a picture to a newspaper, periodical, or syndicate without a caption written — preferably typewritten — and pasted on its back, or on a slip of white paper cut the width of the picture and pasted to the back of the lower edge so that the caption appears below the illustration. Also, though making the caption as brief as possible, be sure that it is a complete description and is full and accurate as to names, place, and date. If it is desired to have the picture returned, follow the caption with the words: “Return to —”, giving name and address.

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The first essential of a picture is, as we have indicated, that it shall actually illustrate. It should illustrate the doing of things. There are occasions when pictures of still life and scenery and interiors are useful, but unless they convey the intended meaning they are usually worse than useless.

Advice was sought on material which a welfare organization wished to utilize for a pamphlet which would show service to men of the navy. One of the pictures suggested for use showed rows of empty cots in a dark and barn-like loft. The picture revealed no sign of life; worse, it conveyed not the slightest indication of comfort. What it showed might have been the cheapest sort of a Bowery lodging house, and one which was even too uncomfortable for the poorest to patronize. If the one who had originally selected the picture had for a single moment sought to place himself in the attitude of mind of a picture editor, a prospective financial contributor, or a navyman, he would have thrown the picture into the waste-basket. It was too dangerous even to consign to a pigeon-hole, although an entirely satisfactory explanation of the scene itself was available.

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This is an extreme example, some may think. It typifies many which appeal for the attention of editors and heads of informative undertakings.

If a picture does not illustrate your meaning, don't take a chance with it. Certainly do not take a chance on a picture which can be misinterpreted.

A picture editor reviewed a collection of fifty or more pictures which had come to a welfare organization from many of its related sources at home and abroad. Those who had taken them believed for the most part that they were pictures of news interest. Out of the batch the editor selected just one. This was a picture of a noted man laying the corner-stone of a building in a foreign city. Several photographs of the same event were excellent pictures of the back of the chief figure in the ceremonies.

There are some different problems involved as between offering pictures to a metropolitan daily or to a news picture syndicate on the one hand, and to the paper in the home town or city of the local organization. But it is worth while

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to try to measure up to the standards of the most discriminating.

The question of what constitutes news is discussed at length in an earlier chapter. The considerations presented there apply to pictures as well as to facts communicated as news information through the printed word. But the newspapers recognize that what we may call "reservoir" pictures, as well as those which are current news illustrations, have their place and use.

Here is a rule which will be found generally guiding: Pictures offered singly to a newspaper should have distinct news value. Pictures offered in a group, and intended for a layout, can be of both kinds—news pictures and reservoir pictures.

The requirements as to pictures intended for submitting to newspapers are less elastic, of course, than the requirements for pictures intended for use in periodicals and pamphlets published by the organization itself. But effort should be made to come as near as possible in this latter class of pictures to meeting the requirements for newspaper use. In this way

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there will be more likelihood of gaining the interest of readers in organization publications, and at the same time of increasing the volume and availability of illustrations for newspaper use.

The value of illustrations for bulletin board purposes and exhibits should be kept in mind.

An exceedingly important consideration in the case of news pictures is the element of time. Many pictures which come to the central office of a welfare organization have lost their news value because of delay in forwarding them.

Some welfare organizations serving memberships have camera clubs. Members of these groups could be interested in providing pictures which would be of service. If in the home communities of the welfare undertaking there are newspapers which use pictures other than those which come to them in matrix or other prepared form, one or another of their editors will probably be glad to give practical advice on news illustrations. It would be advantageous to have them meet for this purpose with the workers and with the camera club.

XI.

BULLETIN BOARDS AND EXHIBITS

EDWARD BOK was one of the most successful popular editors in America. His success was based upon an almost prophetic understanding of what would interest a great mass of Americans. One of his few failures as an editor was an attempt to influence the American people against the use of billboards. This, to us, is only a proof that in this particular thing he was in advance of his time. Already there are indications that people are definitely turning against the wholesale disfiguring of landscapes and buildings by the use of billboards.

A letter from J. R. Keen, secretary of the Municipal Art Society of New York, published in *The New York Evening Post*, December 20, 1923, tells of the fight waged by that organization against the display on public property of placards appealing for funds. This is a practice begun during the war. The letter says in part:

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“We have impartially addressed objections in the past to the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, to the Henry Street Settlement, to the Near East Relief, to the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A., to the Irish Famine Fund, to the China Famine Fund, to Keren Hayesod, to the United Catholic Organizations, to the Salvation Army, and to other religious and welfare organizations, whenever they placed their placards on public property.

“We have pointed out to them that such placards, if of wood and paper, soon fall to pieces and strew our streets with fragments and litter; if of metal, they still disfigure the places where they are fastened. We also called the attention of these citizens to the fact that such a practice, if it becomes a precedent, will be a most undesirable thing, as much money is spent on fine city properties and the appearance of posters, placards, and billboards on such properties is sure to lessen the value of the permanent improvement for which the expenditure was made. Particularly is it true that a monument, or piece of sculpture, or any civic decoration is set up to add beauty to its locality and the presence of incongruous signs quite defeats the purpose of any such structure.

“Not only do we, as a society devoted to civic art, object to such placards in such places, but we have also received many protests from other organizations and from citizens not our members, who have asked us to take action in these cases and in similar ones.

“We think that such appeals to the public can

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adequately be made through the press, in churches, clubs, etc., by means of car cards and window cards, without disfiguring our public places, and we suggested to all these organizations that it is by no means the wisest and best plan to appeal for funds in such a way as to irritate and displease a great many people.

“In all these cases, we assured these various religious and welfare organizations that our protest did not spring from any lack of good-will towards their efforts, which in every case had our good wishes, and which in many cases we, as individuals, helped to support by our contributions, but that we considered it our duty as a Municipal Art Society to call such unnecessary and serious disfigurement of our city to their attention.”

Bulletin boards as well as billboards seem for a long time to have been regarded as necessary excrescences. Understanding is growing that order and beauty are aids to effectiveness. Note the following statement by Neil McMillan, Jr., Director of the Building Bureau of the International Committee of the Y. M. C. A., who makes the following statement:

“The Building Bureau in its instructions to architects on the buildings for whose design it is retained provides for exterior bulletin boards for the men’s and boys’ entrances. In addition, bulletin boards

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are provided for the men's and boys' lobbies and for the gymnasium. In the case of larger buildings, where an extensive educational department is included, there is, of course, a bulletin board for this as well. With the exception of the exterior bulletin boards, which are for posting purposes, the interior boards are largely for routine departmental notices and the miscellaneous information which would be pasted on wall, pinned on door-trim, or otherwise distributed in an untidy fashion unless space is provided for such material. It seems to us that, in addition to the boards outlined above, special advertising mediums should be provided in the lobby and other spaces where the men congregate so that important events can be called to the attention of the membership."

The first problem, then, in the use of a bulletin board is so to place it that it will not be offensive to the eye, and in the solution of this problem the advice of an architect should be secured.

The problem of the arrangement of the material itself on the bulletin board is again a problem where expert advice should be sought, and if suggestions could be secured either from an architect, an artist, or an expert newspaper layout man, it would be found invaluable. This suggestion precludes what seems to be consid-

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ered the inalienable right of any individual to stick up any kind of notice that he sees fit on a bulletin board, and points to the thought that some individual should be responsible for the material on every bulletin board. Wherever a bulletin board is found to be untidy in appearance and uninteresting and stale in content, there no doubt will be found an individual who is already over-burdened with detail, and quite possibly lacking in material and ideas.

The pressure on the time of the welfare worker is a condition common to the profession. But there is in that fact no argument against effort to develop high standards and attractive methods in bulletin board presentation, any more than there is in the fact that some individuals may lack ingenuity.

It is conceivable that a book occasionally offered as a prize for suggestions regarding the bulletin board would produce excellent results and create unsuspected sources of suggestion and material. This will ultimately result in an economy of time and effort. It should also be remembered that, like all other methods advocated in these pages, this should be considered an opportunity for emphasizing other things

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besides the news. It should be used as a means for instruction and stimulation to the same purpose as that which has been indicated as the underlying ideal of information service.

Miss Julia Buxton, of Springfield, Mass., spent many months planning and arranging bulletin boards for the Y. M. C. A. huts of the American Forces in Germany. She has told of her work in an article prepared for *The Springfield (Mass.) Union*.

“Why not present ideas as well as things?” Miss Buxton asks, and then goes on as follows:

“Churches, settlements, clubs, community centers, Boy and Girl Scouts, Y.M. and Y.W.C.A.’s, all such organizations are working for definite returns, though returns not to be measured by money. They strive for culture, noble thought, righteous living. Time was when such matters were regarded as adequately dealt with by preachers and teachers, but these now have rivals who outdo them in constancy and attraction. The pictorial daily and the movies work seven days a week and one must be constant and alert to keep up with them.

“The hut secretaries of the Y.M.C.A., chatting daily with the soldiers, dealing daily with problems of morals, striving to waken interest in worth-while matters, found plenty of topics that lent themselves

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naturally to the bulletin board. It could be used to turn attention to current affairs; to teach the meaning of holidays; to meet existing interests, and carry them into fields worth exploring; to humanize geography; to pique curiosity as to sights in places to be visited by the men when on leave; to acquaint them with artists, writers, musicians, statesmen—folk who have made the world richer by having lived in it.

“In the A. F. in G., materials on the United States and on current topics were a bit limited, and all the papers that came from home—the magazines, and even the jackets on new books—were treasured. For the foreign material there was a wealth of post cards and prints. The boards were of all sorts; painted blackboards being the poorest of all for our purposes. Pine panels stained to match the hut walls or burlap or linoleum framed to harmonize with the rooms were better. Linoleum, indeed, was best of all since it took kindly to pins, temper, paint, and paste, and was easily washed.

“Many rules might be given for the creation of such bulletin boards as these—one idea to a board, for instance; constant variety; the title as a key, and conspicuous. But there is just one rule that must never be broken. No one paying for advertising space asks the reader to use glasses. If you expect to get an idea over, picture and print must be clear and easily grasped. The board must catch the atten-

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tion at once and must be worthy of holding it. But to be worth while a board need not be high-brow. In fact, it must never be high-brow.

“The board had a great function on holidays. Here came the chance to discover artists among the men who could make decorative borders or perhaps the whole design for Christmas or Easter. Often the men brought in photographs and post cards, treasure-trove from their furloughs, some of these very beautiful, and the board made by one of their own number was of immense interest and pride to the unit.

“Such a plan of ‘silent teaching’ may not be carried out without painstaking effort to understand the other fellow’s point of view in the first place, and then one must be ready to give much thought and real labor. The possibilities are great, but such boards are nothing if they are not prepared with the same care and intelligence which the real teacher gives to preparation for his class and the speaker to preparation for his audience.”

There were unusual conditions making for the success of these bulletin boards in the Y. M. C. A. huts in Germany. Here was Miss Buxton, particularly capable for handling such work, and with sufficient time to do it well; and here were thousands of young men, far away from home, in a receptive mood for entertainment and attractive instruction. Moreover, these boards

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did not have to deal with the problems of how to make a batch of routine announcements and miscellaneous matter into an attractive whole.

At the same time much is to be learned from Miss Buxton's ideas and methods. Is it too much to suggest that similar things could be done in many of the buildings of welfare undertakings at home? There can be no serious arguments against regarding Miss Buxton's work as a practical method.

The question arises, in thinking of the bulletin board as a medium for doing more than making announcements: How is it going to be possible to make a board both a utility and a "silent teacher"? Can miscellaneous material, clippings, handwritten and typewritten notices, circular letters, printed announcements, and what-not, be combined with material intended to present attractively an idea or ideal?

Our feeling is that they cannot be combined. It is evident that they should be segregated on separate boards, if conditions permit this. That is Mr. McMillan's suggestion, and therefore has a practical basis. We should certainly seek to make even our announcement boards not only

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neat but attractive in appearance. In any event, stale stuff should not be permitted to remain. The member who continues to find the same old material on the board is not likely to get the habit of turning to it often.

Fresh news, well displayed, is a fairly good demonstration that the organization is alive and progressive. If a bulletin board is regarded as similar to a newspaper, then it may well be worth the effort to make it appear as such in general style and make-up, with occasional sketches, cartoons, or illustrations. Color is also helpful.

The exterior bulletin board offers excellent opportunities for information service of the highest possible appeal. Through it the public itself can be reached, but it must be caught on the run. Here is to be noted again the value of Miss Buxton's suggestions. Present one idea at a time. Seek to change the board often to exert the effect of variety. Prepare the material so that it can be readily seen and read. Keep it human. Never be high-brow.

In the exhibit we again have the "silent teacher" as a means for information service.

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The word "exhibit" brings to mind wall space hung with charts, graphs, placards, posters, illustrations; perhaps tables on which are displayed samples, books, models, and mechanical contrivances. The exhibit is familiar to all. Good use is made of this method at conferences, summer schools, and conventions to inform the membership and also the public of the purpose, the character of program, and the scope of service of the organization.

The education of the personnel in affairs of the organization and in means for making their work effective, through the use of the exhibit, has been a practice followed for many years and to such an extent that a certain technique has been developed. Is it practicable to make a larger use of the exhibit for giving the members and the public a clearer conception of the place and possibilities of the organization in the life of the individual and the community?

A wide diversity of exhibit forms are available as the mechanical means for expressing facts and ideas: panels, posters, charts, placards, photographs, sketches, maps, objects and models, moving or flashlight devices, plays and

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tableaux, physical exhibitions, stereopticon talks, motion pictures, phonograph records, printed matter. But the very variety of possibilities is confusing and there is a forbidding prospect in the time, ingenuity, and expense which may be required to prepare and conduct an exhibit.

These considerations cannot always be excuses. There are occasions when the organization feels that an exhibit must be made. The city undertakes an anniversary exposition, the chamber of commerce promotes a booster campaign, Sunday school and Church conventions are held, Thrift Week comes around once a twelfth month. Such occasions are opportunities, and the organization looks about to see what it should do.

Certainly no exhibit should be attempted if there is danger of its being poorly done. Money and time and energy can be wasted more surely in an exhibit, if it be a poor one, than in most things.

No exhibit should be attempted without a definite idea as to what is to be attempted, and this should, in an exhibit of fairly small dimensions, seek to present one feature of information

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effectively rather than half a dozen or more in a vague way. There should be a unity to the whole presentation, and it must seek to be, as Miss Buxton holds of her type of bulletin board—which is first cousin to an exhibit—human, and not high-brow.

In looking about for effective yet economical methods of making exhibits, do not forget that the organization itself and its processes and products are themselves exhibits. That is the basis on which the Shredded Wheat Company at Niagara Falls opens its factory to visitors. The exhibit is the factory itself, its machinery, personnel, and product.

Is too little advantage taken of the natural joy which boys have in making things? They like to see and to construct models and devices. A model of a summer camp, constructed by the boys themselves, displayed in a store window, might be very effective, and it will tell the story better if we remember to tie it up in some simple way to the idealistic purpose of the organization in conducting the camp.

A useful book on the technical details of ex-

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hibit-making is "The ABC of Exhibit Planning," by Evart G. Routzahn of the Sage Foundation.

Exhibits might well become part of the historical library of the organization, either in the preservation of the actual material itself, or, when this is not possible, photographs of the exhibit should be retained. There is no religious or welfare organization which would not be strengthened by a carefully selected collection of things intimately connected with its past. The various historical societies are beginning to realize this and educate the public in it. It is not long before a church becomes a center of interesting data for its community, and every organization can, on occasion, make use either for itself or for the community of material in an historical library.

NOTE: In connection with the references to billboards early in this chapter it is interesting to note that on March 25, 1924, shortly after this chapter was put into type, the Standard Oil Company of New York announced that "our own contracts for outdoor advertising signs have from a year to eighteen months more to run, but we have determined to abandon such signs on the highways when these contracts expire, where such signs are objectionable and mar the scenic beauty, and will confine ourselves to boards near garages or service stations."

XII.

ADVERTISING

WHAT is meant by advertising? There is a tendency to use the word as synonymous with "publicity," or to make it an inclusive term signifying all promotional methods by which sellers communicate with the buying public. On the basis that "the very best advertising of all is the personal recommendation," one present-day authority defines advertising as "a means of making friends for a product or service." It would be difficult to make a broader definition. But the interpretation indicated by modern business practice makes advertising essentially a business word. Common usage now makes "publicity" the more inclusive term, conceiving advertising as that form of publicity which pays for the privilege of using space to express itself. That is the meaning of the word as used here.

It is interesting to note that advertising, as

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we are using the term, grew out of what we would call publicity. In an earlier chapter Homer is suggested as the original publicity man. Research takes us back to the "crier," whose first function was to make announcements of a religious nature rather than of a secular kind. He continued, with a gradual increase in his functions, from the time of primitive Greece and Rome down through the Middle Ages, when the bard also was in his heyday. Then came the first development of real advertising in the trade-mark. Signs also came into use in mediæval times. But the first newspaper advertisement is said to have appeared not before the sixteenth century. It was not until the great industrial revolution of the nineteenth century that advertising approached the dignity of a profession and a science.

The accepted formula for successful merchandising is: Have something fit to sell, and tell the public about it through advertising. Emerson was strongly disposed to disregard the importance of the latter half of the formula. His conviction was that the public would beat a path through the wilderness to the door of anyone who produced something really worth while.

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The advertising fraternity scorns this idea on the ground that such an isolated manufacturer would perish, and his product with him, if he did not strive for the public's attention.

An advertising authority is credited with the statement that his art can infallibly guarantee a return of \$150,000 to the manufacturer of anything, who will put \$100,000 into advertising; after that the article must make its way on its merits. His meaning evidently is that you can develop at least a temporary interest and a temporary market for a product of any kind, be it goods or service, but that in the long run it is the actual merit of the article which will determine its right to lasting popularity or to "innocuous desuetude." In other words, there is a point beyond which advertising itself loses its power. That is, of course, the philosophy of Emerson's statement; and the assertion of the advertising authority just referred to is evidence that he accepts Emerson's principle as basically and profoundly true. This is emphasized in earlier pages in pointing out that the product and service of the organization must be worth while.

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Does this signify that an organization cannot properly and effectively make use of advertising?

To answer this question we must first answer several others, particularly the following:

What is the purpose of the advertising?

Does advertising lend itself to the achievement of the purpose?

What should be the character of this advertising?

The previous chapters have given a fairly clear indication of the viewpoint of the authors on these questions. That viewpoint may be applied to advertising as follows:

Welfare-organization advertising should have precisely the same purpose as that which we have indicated as the purpose of information service.

Paid advertising lends itself as a contributing factor to the achievement of this purpose if the character of the advertising is consistently and persistently consonant with that purpose.

This latter statement is not a mere exhibition of "talking in a circle," for the character of the advertising is the problem lying at the very

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heart of the whole subject. Let us take up that feature, therefore, for further consideration.

The necessity of dealing only with facts is as obvious in advertising as in other forms of presentation. The Associated Advertising Clubs of the World have emphasized this by taking the position that advertising will not find its true place and full usefulness until the "truth-in-advertising" movement prevails.

Recognition of that principle does not, however, establish advertising by the welfare organization as essentially different from advertising Ivory soap, or tomorrow's bargains at Wanamaker's, or the swimming-pool in Madison Square Garden, or next week's prize fight.

It is impossible to carry forward in a permanent way the great mission of the organization if it is to be advertised in a way which would permit of its being misconstrued as a commercial undertaking.

A conception of advertising for welfare purposes which places it in a very different category from commercial advertising is found in the advertising profession itself. An earlier chapter mentions a statement made before

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the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World. It is summarized substantially as follows: Advertising cannot be used advantageously in promoting community movements and the institutional life of society in the way it is now used by business. That, you will note, is the thought of professional advertising men themselves.

Put the case another way. We think of welfare work as a profession, for its effective practice is based on tradition of service, on specialized experience, and on application of high standards. One of the most remarkable evidences of the devotion of such workers to their profession is this: That, despite outside pecuniary temptations, a large and efficient body of the personnel remains loyal, and it insists not only upon the maintenance of past standards but the improvement if possible of these standards. This is characteristic of the major professions. The man who breaks or jeopardizes the accepted standards of his professional calling is ostracized by his fraternity. The welfare worker who does not uphold the standards of the profession cannot, therefore, consider

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himself a representative member of the profession.

The basic consideration in the presentation, however made, of ideals, purpose, and service is this: Can we not place faith in the idealism of the American people? Abraham Lincoln placed his faith in it, and every school-boy knows that his faith was not misplaced in a time of utmost trial when so-called practical men were turning away from his leadership. The evolution of problems before the American people today—religious, educational, political, social—proves them to be a people climbing toward ideals.

Is it a practical possibility to indicate ideals in our advertising? It is quite easy to do that in certain kinds of advertising, and particularly in the special mediums of an undertaking. But how can it be done in connection with paid advertising, considering the necessity of economizing on the use of space and of getting some real evidences of results from expenditure?

The attempt here is to do no more than indicate basic principles and methods. The development of advertising copy conforming with our conceptions of welfare-organization advertising is obviously of itself an extensive subject.

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But this question is pertinent: Is there any real objection to using in paid advertising, even with its exigencies of space and of drawing-power, methods such as we might agree are usable in our own special mediums?

No instance has come under our observation or to our knowledge of a continuous national advertising campaign for a welfare organization carried on under the supervision of an expert advertising manager, although such campaigns have been discussed and laid out on paper. The great problem in connection with such a campaign, the one which makes it questionable, is the problem of continuity. All authorities on advertising agree that continuity is an essential feature of any advertising campaign undertaken for a thing that is to be permanently before the public. As long as national advertising for welfare organizations is still an unproven problem so long this question of continuity will be one of the most difficult in preparing a budget for the undertaking.

There have been many local and occasional advertising campaigns. The emphasis in the majority of those that we have seen has been

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sentimental and emotional, rather than constructive, and of these campaigns our criticism is twofold: in the first place, they are not continuous; in the second, they are not constructive.

Our own opinion is that the time has not yet come for national campaigns of advertising for any of the welfare organizations that have come under our observation, nor do we feel that there is yet a place for anything in the nature of a so-called advertising campaign for local undertakings except in connection with financial problems, which we have not attempted to touch upon in this volume. The conspicuous exception that comes to our minds is the possibility of good results from carefully prepared material in connection with certain varieties of educational undertakings. Another exception is one that is hardly to be considered in the technical acceptance of the use of the word "campaign." It has to do with announcements, even though they are run in series, concerning meetings, special meetings, or regular sessions of churches or other organizations. These have been advertised with good results in many localities.

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It would be a basic mistake for a welfare organization to expect that paid advertising must necessarily be of such character as to permit a checking-up of tangible results. This is perfectly proper if not carried too far; but if it is the guiding consideration in advertising, then that advertising will necessarily be almost wholly of a commercial character, and will be inadequate and misleading because not representative and interpretative of the real purpose.

XIII.

THE SURE WAY

THOSE who have faith in democracy base their hope for the future on education.

Prejudice can only be overcome by putting understanding in place of ignorance—a slow way but the only sure one.

How to present facts so that they will be recognized and accepted as such and will impel individuals and groups to act upon them calls for never-ending study. There must be alertness and initiative in recognizing pertinent facts, care and exactness in gathering them, and an accurate and open mind applied to studying them.

Success in using facts requires not only understanding of how properly to arrange them but knowledge of various methods of phrasing for various groups of readers. There must be persistence, tempered by a fine sense of fitness as to time, place and audience, in distributing them.

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Courage there must be of no mean sort—courage to turn away from sensationalism, half truths and contentions which seem to promise temporary interest.

Combined with an appreciation and understanding of truth there must be a rare quality of practical, constructive imagination and a sympathetic understanding of human beings. Thus dreams may be made real.

Those wishing to carry on a truly informative undertaking must look far into the future for results. They must be content from day to day so to do their work and so to present their facts that there will be a steady strengthening and broadening of confidence and understanding. Upon this the future will rise secure.

USEFUL BOOKS

The following books will be found useful for reference and study and as a basis for a working library. The list is offered without prejudice to other excellent volumes:

PUBLIC OPINION AND POPULAR GOVERNMENT, by A. Lawrence Lowell, President of Harvard University. Longmans, Green & Co., (American Citizen Series.)

“President Lowell deals with the most difficult and the most momentous question of government—how to transmit the force of individual opinion and preference into public action. This is the crux of popular institutions.”—From Introductory Note by Albert Bushnell Hart.

PUBLIC OPINION, by Walter Lippman. Harcourt, Brace & Co.

“Offers a definite theory of public opinion, a reason for the limitations of its action, and a specific remedy for its shortcomings as a determining force in popular government.”—*Bookman*.

LOOKING FORWARD—MASS EDUCATION THROUGH PUBLICITY, by Sir Charles Higham. Alfred A. Knopf.

“This book is an attempt to show the value of organized publicity when educating people in the mass.”

LANGUAGE FOR MEN OF AFFAIRS, 2 volumes.
Vol. I, Talking Business, by John M. Clapp.
Vol. II, Business Writing, by James M. Lee.
Ronald Press Co.

USEFUL BOOKS

Of value to the man who seeks to direct his conversation wisely, to write letters, to make a speech now and then, to write a special article, to appraise if not construct an advertisement.

HANDBOOK FOR NEWSPAPER WORKERS, by Grant M. Hyde.

D. Appleton & Co.

Written primarily for newspapers but all who deal with type as editor, writer or advertiser will find in it material of interest and value.

PUBLICITY, by R. H. Wilder and K. L. Buell.

The Ronald Press Co.

The publishers describe this book as "a manual for the use of business, civic, or social service organizations." Helpful for reference, especially as it is well indexed.

MAKING ADVERTISEMENTS AND MAKING THEM PAY, by Roy S. Durstine.

Charles Scribner's Sons.

Discussion of display advertising; treating of appeals, copy, illustrations, from the viewpoint of an experienced advertising man.

EFFECTIVE HOUSE ORGANS, by Robert G. Ramsay.

D. Appleton & Co.

Principles and practice of editing and publishing house organs. Written mainly for business concerns, and conceives house organ chiefly as advertising, but is written on basis of long experience, and is replete with suggestions.

ABC OF EXHIBIT PLANNING, by E. G. Routzahn and M. S. Routzahn.

Russell Sage Foundation.

Planning, production and use of graphic material; also organization and management of exhibits discussed. Illustrated.

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